

# OUR BASE BALL CLUB



**AND HOW IT WON THE CHAMPIONSHIP**

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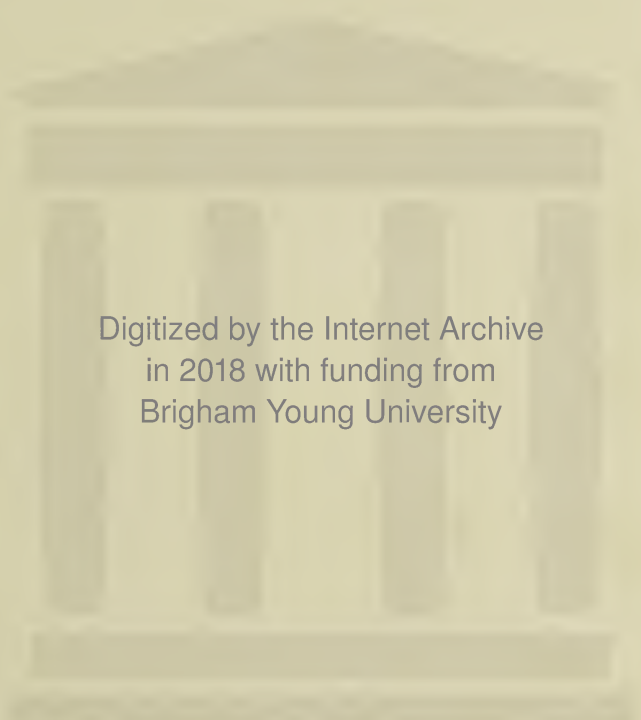






OUR BASE BALL CLUB.





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"YOUR FATHER, THE JUDGE, SAYS YOU SHOULD COME TO BREAKFAST RIGHT AWAY, MISS."—Frontispiece.

# OUR BASE BALL CLUB

AND

*HOW IT WON THE CHAMPIONSHIP*

BY

NOAH BROOKS

*Author of "The Fairport Nine," "The Boy Emigrants," etc.*

*WITH AN INTRODUCTION*

BY

AL. G. SPALDING

OF THE CHICAGO BASE BALL CLUB

NEW YORK

E. P. DUTTON AND COMPANY

39 WEST 23d STREET

1884



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*St. Johnland  
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Suffolk Co., N. Y*

*Press of  
J. J. Little & Co.  
10 Astor Place, N. Y*

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## INTRODUCTION.

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When we consider how strong a hold the pastime of base ball playing has upon our people, it is a little surprising that more frequent use of the game, as a framework, has not been made by writers of fiction. There are very few Americans, certainly very few of the younger generation, who are not only familiar with the nomenclature and rules of base ball, but are enthusiastic lovers of the sport. Even among the gentler sex, who may be regarded as spectators only of the game, there is to be found much sound information and an intelligent acquaintance with the details of base ball playing; while every hearty and wholesomely taught boy knows everything worth knowing about the game, the famous players, the historic contests, and the notable features of the sport, as practiced in various sections of the republic.

To write an introduction to a story whose slender plot should be threaded on a base ball match seems to be an almost superfluous work. But I am glad that Mr. Brooks has undertaken to illustrate "The National Game" by a story of outdoor life, founded on fact and incidentally

introducing personages which are not wholly creatures of his imagination. The tale here told very cleverly gives the reader a glimpse of the ups and downs, the trials and the triumphs of a base ball club. It is written by one who is thoroughly well informed of the things concerning which he gives such vivid pictures, and, while nothing is really needed to popularize the game, I am sure the story will commend itself to every lover of pure and wholesome literature.

A. G. SPALDING.

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# OUR BASE BALL CLUB,

*AND HOW IT WON THE CHAMPIONSHIP.*



## CHAPTER I.

### GREAT EXPECTATIONS.

Alice HOWELL was flattening her pretty nose against the window pane as she looked ruefully out into the misty atmosphere that surrounded her father's house in North Catalpa. It was eight o'clock in the morning, and the great base ball match was set for two o'clock, that afternoon. As soon as she had risen, Alice had run to the window to see what were the signs of the sky, for Alice was an ardent lover of the American game, and her heart was set on the great match that was to come off on the Agricultural Grounds, near Catalpa, that day. The sky was dull and lowering, and there was little chance that the game would be called.

"Your father, the Judge, says you should come to breakfast right away, miss," said the little handmaid of the house.

Alice turned from the window with an impatient sigh, saying "Oh dear, Jessie, do you suppose the Jonesville Nine will come up to play the Catalpas, this afternoon?"

"'Deed I don't know, miss. I hope so, for Miss Anstress has promised me that I shall go over to see the game if it is played, and goodness only knows when I shall get off again to see a base ball match if I don't go to-day."

"But look at the weather! It's as dark as a pocket, and it looks as if it might rain at any moment. Oh dear! oh dear! it's too bad, so it is. And this is to be the last game of the season, and the decisive one, too." And so, more talking to herself than to the small servant who trotted behind her, with a sympathetic air, the pretty Miss Alice went to the breakfast-table where her father waited for her with an aspect of amused dignity.

"One cannot see across the river for the fog, papa," said the girl, with a disconsolate tone, as she seated herself. "The fences are dripping with moisture, and the dam roars just as it always does when there is a rain-storm coming up. How very provoking!"

"Well, and has my little girl forgotten that it was the day before yesterday that Farmer Boggs was in here from Sugar Grove and said that unless they had more rain before the frosts set in, it would be a hard year for winter wheat? And wasn't it my little girl who said that she wanted Stone River running full, this fall, in order that she might enjoy her new club skates when the ice came?"

"But, papa, the crops can wait a day or two for the fall rains, I am sure, and I should be willing to give up a whole



winter's skating if the Catalpas would only beat the Jonesville Nine—the horrid fellows! And I am sure they would beat them, if they only played them to-day, for they are in capital form now.”

“Hush! hush! my daughter,” said Judge Howell, with a little shudder, “that is slang that you are using, and I shall have to curtail your base ball amusement if you are so ready to pick up the jargon of what they call, I believe, ‘The Diamond Field,’ for I do not want my daughter to mingle the slang of the game with her mother’s mode of speech.”

The Judge was somewhat prosy and not at all in love with the noble game which his daughter, in common with all of the girls of Catalpa, and of the whole Stone River country, for that matter, followed with so much enthusiasm.

The base ball club of Catalpa was made up of some of the finest young fellows in the town. Catalpa was situated on both sides of Stone River, in northern Illinois. It was a busy manufacturing and milling community, and from its homes had gone many a stalwart young chap to fight his country’s battles in the southwest. The survivors of the company that went out and came back, decimated as to numbers and not all sound in body, founded the first base ball club of the region. The members of the club called themselves “The Catalpas,” after their town. Most of the players lived on the north side of the river, and were soon dubbed “The North Catalpas” by their rivals who, living

on the other side of the stream, and in the main portion of the town, and forming another club, arrogated to themselves the title of "Catalpa's Champions."

Gradually, the membership of the two organizations changed. The old soldiers retired in favor of their sons and nephews. The club on the south side of the river was reorganized and an entirely new set of young men came into it. The name of "The Dean County Nine," was given to the southside club, and, as it was largely composed of young men who worked in the flouring mills and the lumber-yards along the river front, it was famous for the brawn and muscle of its players.

The Catalpa Nine, on the other hand, was made up of students in the Seminary, young fellows in the law and county offices of the town, and sons of gentlemen of leisure. There was a chasm as wide as Stone River fixed between the Dean County Nine and the Catalpa Nine, so far as social relations were concerned. The Dean County players called the Catalpas "Aristocrats" and the Catalpas retorted with the epithet of "Stalwarts" applied to their town rivals. When it is added that the finest residences were built on the north side of the river dividing the town, and that the men of more moderate means dwelt on the business side of the stream, the reason for the imaginary line of separation betwixt the two ball clubs will be more apparent.

After repeated and not always friendly matches between the rival clubs, they were drawn together by the appearance

of a common enemy. From the little town of Jonesville, situated eighteen miles down the river, came the Jonesvillians, as they called themselves, a powerful and well-trained nine. They had challenged and vanquished the nine of Dry Plains, the Blue Falls Nine, and their own Home Club, commonly known through the Stone River region as "The Jonesville Scrubs." Flushed with victory, the Jonesvillians had challenged and played two games with the Catalpas, contesting the championship of northern Illinois. It must be admitted that the record of neither of the two Catalpa clubs was one of which the people of the town had any right to be proud. Both clubs, while closely contesting with each other, had been repeatedly beaten by visitors from the surrounding region. Naturally the sympathies of the "Stalwarts" was with the "Aristocrats" when an out-of-town club came to try conclusions. Every true son and daughter of the town of Catalpa was hotly enlisted for the home nine in any contest that might be fought out for the championship. It was aggravating that the Jonesville Nine, most of whom were rough and loud-talking fellows, should conquer the whole country, from the Wisconsin line to Lasalle, and from Chicago to the Mississippi River.

That was the reason why Miss Alice Howell, the only daughter and the spoiled child of the eminent and widowed district Judge, should be downcast and fidgety when she looked out and saw, on this fateful morning, that the weather gave signs of being unfit for the decisive game

for the championship. The Jonesville Nine had won the first game. The Catalpas were victors in the second game. To-day, if all went well, would give the championship to the Catalpas. The Catalpas had regularly "whitewashed" the Dean County Nine, in spite of their stalwart strength. But they had failed to hold their own against many another club from other portions of the country roundabout. In the first game for the championship, the Catalpas had beaten the Jonesvillians by a score of 24 to 13—an overwhelming defeat for the down-river club. But the Jonesville men had carried off the second game with a score of 14 to 13, which was a close game, and was lost by the Catalpas, as their friends all said, by the Catalpas' being in bad condition. Albert Heaton, the catcher, was afflicted with blistered hands and could do very little effective work behind the bat; and George Buckner, center fielder, had been obliged to leave the field just before game was called, on account of a sudden sickness in his own home; and this necessitated sundry changes that demoralized the Nine, and disarranged their plans.

"And after all," said Alice, exultingly, as she recounted these facts to her father, on the morning of the fateful day, "after all, the Jonesvillians only beat by one run. To-day, the Catalpas are in splendid form—condition, I mean, and if it only would clear off, I am sure they will send the Jonesville fellows down the river with what Ben Burton calls 'a basket of goose eggs,'—I beg pardon, papa, for

this bit of slang; but you will observe that it is a quotation."

"Yes, from a favorite author," said the Judge, rising from the breakfast table, with a shrewd smile.

Alice flushed, a little angrily, perhaps, for she did not like Burton, although he was her cousin and was said to be a suitor for her favor.

## CHAPTER II.

### "A SCRUB GAME."

NOTWITHSTANDING the gloom of the morning, the day came off bright and fine, and by the time the train was due from the West, bringing the Jonesville boys, the weather was perfect. A serene October sky bent over Catalpa, and the bright river flowed rippling toward the Mississippi, its banks red and yellow with autumnal foliage. Crossing the bridge from North Catalpa and from the farming settlements to the north were strings of buggies, lumber-wagons and other vehicles; and not a few sight-seers jogged along on horseback, all with their faces set toward the Agricultural Fair Grounds, just above the town and lying to the southward. Catalpa is built on a slope that descends from the rolling prairie to the bank of Stone River. Once out of the town, one reaches a lovely stretch of undulating ground skirted by a dead level plain, admirably adapted for a base ball field. The original use of the Fair Grounds had almost been forgotten when the ball clubs of Catalpa began to practice within the enclosure. The Northern District fair had

gone farther North, and the grounds were left to chance comers—a travelling circus, or an occasional amateur racing match.

To-day, the blue and white flag of the Catalpas floated proudly from what had once been the Judges' stand, while the pale green colors of the Jonesvillians hung lazily from a staff driven into the ground to the westward of the track. For more than an hour before the time set for the calling of the game, a steady stream of people poured into the enclosure. The battered and rickety seats had been patched up to bear the weight of those who were willing to pay the small fee exacted for the privilege; but the mass of the spectators were grouped together in the open spaces to the westward and southward of these, and farther around the ring was a thin line of vehicles of various descriptions. Men and women on horseback, young girls crowded into wagon-boxes, and boys ramping around on scrubby mustangs, filled up the background.

It was a pretty sight. And while the crowd waited for the hour to arrive, much scientific base ball gossip drifted about the enclosure. Village lads who had worked hard or had teased with uncommon assiduity to secure the "two bits" needed to gain admission to the grounds, chaffed each other vociferously and exchanged learned comments on the playing and the qualities of the combatants.

"Oh you should have seen John Brubaker play right field that day when the Catalpas sent the Jonesvillers home

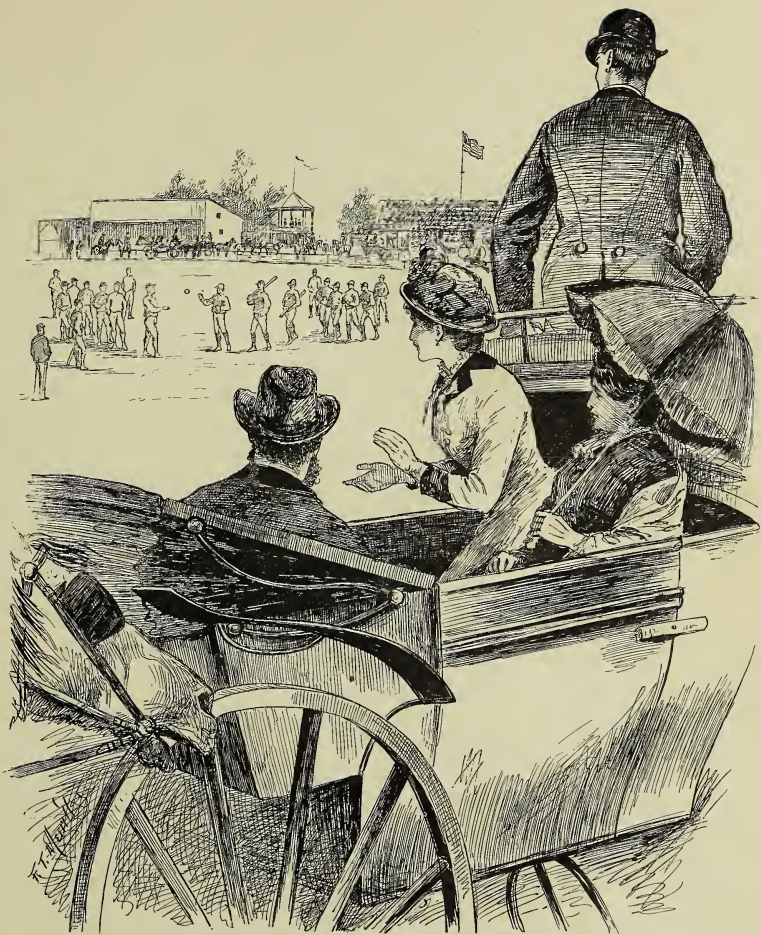


with a big headache," said one of these small critics, as he viewed with admiration Brubaker's stalwart form reclining at ease in the shade of the judges' stand. "Why he just everlastingly got away with the ball every time one of the Jonesvillers gave him one. Then there was Lew Morris, there's no player in the Jonesvillers, 'cept it is Larry Boyne, that can catch a ball like Lew, and why the Catalpas keep him in the left field, I don't know."

"Oh you talk too much with your mouth, you, Bill, you," cried a bigger base ball connoisseur. "What do you know about the game? Why, I saw the Jonesvillains, three years ago, when they first played the old Catalpas, I mean the soldier boys. That was playing, now I tell you. Hurrah! There comes the Nine!"

Pretty Alice Howell, sitting in her father's carriage and accompanied by the Judge and her severe-looking aunt, Miss Anstress, clapped her hands at the sight, for the two Nines drew near to each other and the game was called. The dignified Judge smiled at the girl's enthusiasm, but, as he looked around, he saw that multitudes of other young ladies, as well as ladies no longer young—mothers and aged spinsters, watched the preliminaries of the game with absorbing interest.

The Jonesville Nine were not so well developed, physically, as the Catalpas. They were mostly farmer's sons, born and bred on the low prairies to the westward of Stone River. It is a region long famous for its prevailing fever-and-ague



'PRETTY ALICE HOWELL, SITTING IN HER FATHER'S CARRIAGE, AND ACCOMPANIED BY THE JUDGE AND HER SEVERE LOOKING AUNT, MISS ANSTRESS, CLAPPED HER HANDS AT THE SIGHT.'—Page 18.



epidemic. The sallow faces of some of the Jonesville players suggested quinine and "cholagogue," just then a favorite specific among the ague-smitten population of Northern Illinois. Nor were the members of the visiting Nine as uniform in size and appearance as the Catalpas. The breadth of chest and vigorous outline of the home nine were not repeated in the forms of the Jonesville boys.

The Catalpas were well chosen with an eye to symmetry and uniformity. They were all brawny and athletic young fellows. As they were mostly men of leisure, they had had plenty of time to practice, and they were apparently ready to give good account of themselves. Chiefly on Al Heaton, the stalwart catcher, did the eyes of the multitude rest with favor. He was a tall, shapely young fellow, with a ruddy and oval face, bright brown eyes, a keen glance, and a sinewy length of limb that gave him pre-eminence in the field.

The batting game of the Catalpas was better than that of the Jonesvillians, as all previous encounters had shown. But the fielding of the Jonesville boys was far better than that of any other nine with whom they had measured their strength and skill. And Larry Boyne, a fresh-faced and laughing young man from Sugar Grove, but a member of the Jonesville Nine, was the champion catcher of the whole region. So long as the Jonesville Nine held on to Larry, they felt sure of victory. Larry Boyne was a trifle shorter than the average of his comrades. His round and well-poised head was covered with a shock of curly flaxen

hair, and his sturdy legs, muscular arms and ample chest gave token of a large stock of reserved power. "That's the best looking Jonesvillain of them all" was the secret thought of many an observant girl and the open criticism of many a loud-talking spectator.

This is the manner of placing the two Clubs:—

*Catalpas.*

LEWIS MORRIS, L. F.  
 CHARLIE KING, P.  
 HART STIRLING, 2d B.  
 WILL SPRAGUE, 3d B.  
 JOHN BRUBAKER, R. F.  
 HIRAM PORTER, 1st B.  
 GEORGE BUCKNER, C. F.  
 ALBERT HEATON, C.  
 BEN BURTON, S. S.

*Jonesvilles.*

STUDLEY, 2d B.  
 LARRY BOYNE, C.  
 MORRISON, 1st B.  
 ELLIS, P.  
 WHEELER, C. F.  
 MARTIN, L. F.  
 SIMPSON, 3d B.  
 BERTHELET, R. F.  
 ALEXANDER, S. S.

The Catalpas won the toss and went to the field, with due consideration for the improvement of their chances in the final innings, and the game began with a comfortable feeling pervading the champions of the home nine. The winning of the toss was a good omen, everybody thought.

A buzz of half-suppressed excitement swept over the field as Studley, of the Jonesville Nine, went first to the bat. He sent a low ball to second base which Hart Stirling failed to hold, and Studley got to first base. Larry Boyne followed and sent up a sky-high ball, and Studley, having stolen to second and third base, got safely home, while

Larry reached second base. Morrison sent a good right fielder, on which he got halfway around, while Larry, with a rush, made the home run, adding one more to the score of the Jonesvilles. Alice bit her lip with vexation, but some of the more magnanimous of the townspeople commented, under their breath, "Good for the red-cheeked Irishman!"

Great things were expected of Ellis, the champion pitcher of the Jonesvillians, who went next to the bat, and who was reckoned as nearly as good with the bat as with the ball; but he made a poor strike, and, with a long-drawn "Oh-h-h!" from the sympathetic friends of the home club, the ball dropped near the home base and the young champion of Jonesville went out on his first. Next, Morrison, in his haste to get to third base, was put out by Will Sprague, and the fortunes of the visitors visibly waned. Wheeler, who went next to the bat, provoked a murmur of approbation from the spectators, who were now warming up to the game, and who admired the handsome proportions and springy movements of the center fielder of the Jonesvillers. He sent a resounding ball safely to the right field, got to first base, but, overrunning the second base, was neatly put out by Hart Stirling, the second base man of the Catalpas. Thus closed the innings—two runs for the visiting Nine.

"Not much to brag of," remarked Bill Van Orman, the big pitcher of the Dean County Nine. "Not much to brag of, and I don't think that the Jonesvillains are feeling

first rate over this. Let them wait until Al Heaton and Charlie King get after them. Then they'll sing small, I allow."

"Hush up, you, there goes Lew Morris to the bat for the Catalpas. He'll show them something. Look at that chist of his! Golly! don't I remember him, though!" remarked Hank Mitchell.

Lew Morris, tall, handsome and sinewy, deserved the praises lavished upon him, as he stood, modestly but confidently, to open the innings for the Catalpas. But, to the great disappointment of his admirers, he failed to make a hit and was sent to first base on three called balls. Charlie King justified the expectations of his friends by striking a tremendous ball to right field, on which Lew Morris tallied one, but in trying to get to second base, was put out by Studley in excellent style. Hart Stirling followed, making the first quarter, and Will Sprague went to second base on a strong hit to right field, which brought Stirling home. John Brubaker next went to the bat, with an air of serene confidence, but he failed to satisfy the expectations of the onlookers, and went out on a foul tip.

"Your champions do not seem to be in good condition, to-day, Alice," said the Judge, demurely. "I am just beginning to become interested in the game, and I must say that I shouldn't like to see the Catalpas beaten."

"Thank you, papa," said Alice, her eyes sparkling with excitement. "I thought you would get waked up if you



once saw the play and realized how much depends on the game to-day."

"It's the championship of the Northern District, is it not, my child?"

"Yes, and if the Catalpas don't win now, I am afraid—well, I don't know what I am afraid of. But they will be dreadfully discouraged."

"So shall I be," said the Judge, gravely turning his eyes to the stand, where Hiram Porter, the first base man of the home nine, and an honor man in his class at Ann Arbor, had taken up the bat. Hiram retrieved the failing fortunes of the Catalpas by a powerful ball to center field on which he reached the first base. George Buckner, who followed, sent a high ball which was beautifully caught by Studley, on second base, amidst murmurs of applause, as if the townsmen and townswomen of the Catalpas were half-ashamed to give full expression to their extorted admiration of the visitors' good play.

"That was well done, anyway," remarked Hank Mitchell, "and that winds up the first inning with three outs and three runs to two for the Jonesvillains. Come, you must wake up, Catalpas, or we shall get licked again."

"Wait until the Catalpas come in on the last innings, and then you'll see some fun. They are laying low for black ducks, and don't you forget that. We've tried them too many times, Hank, and you know it." This was Van Orman's shrewd comment, as the second inning began with

Martin, the Jonesville left fielder, at the bat. He should not have made the first base "by rights" as the observant Hank remarked, under his breath, but Charlie King and Hiram Porter fumbled the ball, and he got safely to first. Simpson struck the ball straight into the pitcher's hands and went out ignominiously. Then Berthelet went out on three strikes, and the spirits of the sympathetic spectators rose perceptibly. Two out and no runs for the visitors.

"Things are looking dark for your friends from Jonesville," said the Judge. "And, by the way, isn't there danger of their getting what you call 'a goose-egg' in this game, Alice?"

"O yes, papa," she answered, "I shouldn't wonder the least bit if they should be whitewashed in this inning, but there are so many chances against it that I wouldn't like to boast too much beforehand. Those Jonesville boys are awful sly!"

"That's Sam Alexander at the bat now, trying in vain to strike the ball." And, as Alice spoke, Alexander walked to first base on called balls, and Martin cleverly made his home run, scoring one for the Jonesvillians. "So they will not be whitewashed, at all events," said Alice, with a little sigh.

Studley now made his second base by a ground ball to third base which Will Sprague failed to stop, and by which also Alexander came home. Larry Boyne, smiling, but keenly alive to the critical condition of affairs, now went to

the bat, made a magnificent ball to center field and went to first base whither he was quickly followed by Morrison, and Studley scored another run for the Jonesville Nine. Next, amidst great excitement, for the play was now waxing hot, Ellis struck a splendid right fielder, by which Larry and Morrison easily reached the home plate and Studley got to second base. The spectators trembled with excitement as Wheeler made a capital safe hit to center field, Studley got in, Wheeler reached the second base, stole to third, and, by the wild throwing of the Catalpas, got home on a passed ball.

Next, Martin got to first base on a slow ball to right field, and then home on passed balls. He was followed by Simpson, after two strikes, on which he got to first base and came dangerously near being put out by Hart Stirling, who made a fine one-handed catch amidst the ringing applause of the spectators, Alice Howell's small handmaid exciting much mirth by her shrill exclamation of "isn't he grand!" when Hart, with a tremendous leap, secured the ball as it was flying far above his head.

Berthelet then went out on a foul tip leaving Simpson on the base and closing the innings for the Jonesvillians. Al Heaton having gone to the bat for the Catalpas, made his first base on called balls, and when Ben Burton, who succeeded him at the bat, made a good hit, he reached third base. Burton then got to second base, and Al Heaton reached the home plate, while Larry Boyne was

attempting to throw Burton out at second base. Lew Morris next got to first base through the muffing of Studley, but was forced out by Charlie King, who sharply followed him to the first. Will Sprague sent the ball well up into the sky, but Berthelet, the agile and keen-eyed young Frenchman in the right field, caught it handsomely, and Will retired in good order. John Brubaker went to first base, and then Ellis, the Jonesville pitcher, made a muff with his ball, giving the Catalpas one tally. Hiram Porter followed with a safe hit, but George Buckner went out on a foul ball and the inning closed with a score of ten for the Jonesville boys and eight for the Catalpas.

The Jonesvilles opened the third inning by sending Alexander to the bat. He was sent to first base on called balls, and was followed by Studley, who sent a ball to Ben Burton at short stop, but which Ben muffed, and Studley got safely to first base. Larry Boyne followed with a winged ball which he sent flying to the right field and which enabled him to reach second base and brought Alexander and Studley home. Morrison sent an air ball to left field, by which he reached first base, and Larry came home. Then Ellis hit a ground ball to Ben Burton at short stop, which Ben muffed again, allowing Larry to come home and Ellis to get to first base. Wheeler made first base on a ground ball to left field, and Martin sent a slow ball to center field which reached the first base before him. During the passage of the ball, however,

Morrison came home, and Ellis subsequently tallied on a passed ball. Simpson went to the bat and was struck out, and Berthelet, who followed, was neatly caught out on a foul fly by Ben Burton, who thus partially retrieved his reputation and the inning was closed for the Jonesvilles.

The showing for the Catalpas was now pretty dark, and it did not improve during their next inning. Al Heaton, who led for the home nine, was put out in attempting to steal from first to second base, and Ben Burton, who followed him, met with a similar disaster. Lew Morris went to first base on a ball to short stop which Alexander overthrew to first base. Next, Charlie King hit an air ball which was caught by Alexander at short stop, leaving three out with Morris dead on the second base. The score then stood, Jonesvilles, 15; Catalpas, 8.

"A whitewash!" cried Hank Mitchell, uncertain whether he ought to exult as an old adversary of the home club, or be downcast as a citizen of the town of Catalpa. But, his patriotism rallying in time, he cried to Andrew Jackson Simis, a Jonesville spectator, "I s'pose you think your boys are going to get away with us, this time? Just you wait till the last innings, and then you will see them come up with a rush."

"They'd better begin to rush pretty quick, then," was the sneering answer. "I guess your goose is cooked." There was a stir among the Dean County Nine, who, with their friends, sat together at the end of the range of seats, when

this unfriendly remark was flung out. There were threatening glances and clenched fists in the group of Catalpa boys.

"Here! here! no squabbling!" cried Deputy Sheriff Wheeler, hurrying up, as his vigilant eye fell on the angry-looking knot of lads. "These men are visitors; can't you behave yourselves?"

But the Catalpas were in nowise cast down. Lew Morris, their captain, went among the boys and impressed on them something of his own cheerful courage and roused them to the importance of making a tremendous effort in the next inning. Perhaps the Jonesvillians were unduly elated. Their first man at the bat, Alexander, was put out by sending the ball almost directly into the hands of Hiram Porter at first base. Then Studley sent a good ball to center field, on which he went to first base, and went to second while Larry Boyne was batting. Larry tipped a foul fly which Al Heaton caught, and Morrison, who succeeded him, was caught out in a precisely similar manner, and the inning closed with Studley left on the second base and a "whitewash" for the visitors.

There was great uproar in the crowd around the field, as soon as the Catalpas went in their turn to the bat. The townsfolk forgot all decorum in their delight over the semblance of victory thus snatched from defeat. They cheered the Catalpas as they came in from the field, and by their noise, at least, showed that no impartial judgment could be expected from the majority of the spectators. Judge

Howell critically looked over the crowd and remarked to Alice that he thought it was bad mannered in the townspeople to exult over the defeat or reverses of their visitors.

"But it is because they know that the Catalpas are going to be beaten, after all," said Alice, with a tone of great despondency.

"Going to be beaten?" asked the Judge, with surprise. "Why, haven't they just given the Jonesvilles a whitewash, as I think you call it, and the score is 15 to 8, with your favorites going to the bat?"

"Yes, papa, that is so; but you see that the Jonesvillains play a much better fielding game than the Catalpas, and I am sure that our club will never be able to regain what they have lost."

Miss Alice soon began to think that she had lost hope too soon, for the Catalpas scored three runs in their inning, Hart Stirling having made a home run on a tremendous ball sent to left field where it was muffed shamefully, first by Martin and then by Simpson. Will Sprague and John Brubaker followed him successfully, and Hiram Porter, who had made his first base, was put out by Morrison. The same fate overtook George Buckner and Al Heaton, who were put out by the active and vigilant first base man of the Jonesvilles. Nevertheless, the inning closed with a decided gain for the home nine, the score being 15 for the Jonesvilles, 11 for the Catalpas.

There was intense but suppressed excitement all around

the field, as the visitors sent Ellis to the bat, and he was at once caught out by Hart Stirling on a fly sent to second base. Wheeler made first base, and Martin, who followed him, was put out on first base, while Wheeler came home on a ball balked by Charlie King. Simpson was put out on first base, and the Catalpas took their inning, sending Ben Burton to the bat. He was caught out by Studley; then Lew Morris was put out at first base by a ball sent by Alexander to Morrison; next Charlie King went out on called balls, and, amidst cries of "another whitewash!" the inning closed with a score of 16 to 11, in favor of the visitors.

In the sixth inning, the Jonesvilles added eight to their score, and the Catalpas gained seven, thus making the home nine a little more hopeful, although the relative distance of the two nines was not changed. The feature of this inning was a grand hit to the center field made by Larry Boyne, on which he made first base and brought home Alexander and Studley, who were on the second and third bases, respectively. The score stood thus: Jonesvilles, 24, Catalpas, 18. And there was no exultation in the ranks of the townsfolk.

Larry Boyne went to the bat in the next inning, for the visiting Nine. He sent a magnificent air ball so high that it seemed lost in the misty blue of the October sky. But it descended straight into the hands of John Brubaker in the right field, and a chorus of "ah-h-h's" went up from the assembled multitude. Morrison was caught out on



a foul fly; Ellis shared his fate, and Wheeler was put out on first base. Great was the exultation among the citizens of Catalpa. The Jonesvillers had been again whitewashed. The short October day was wearing on apace, but the chances of the Catalpas were improving as the light went down in the west.

The home nine added three to their score in the inning, home runs being made by John Brubaker, Hiram Porter, and George Buckner. Al Heaton and Ben Burton were both put out by foul flies. Charlie King was put out on first base, leaving Lew Morris on third base. But as the score stood 24 for the Jonesvilles and 21 for the home nine, the spirits of the majority of the spectators, whose sympathies were all one way, began to rise. Perhaps the Jonesvillers would be sent home without the championship.

But these hopes were dashed by the next inning, which was the eighth, the Jonesvilles having gained one run, while the Catalpas were ignominiously "whitewashed." The visitors showed their good qualities in the field by a fine double play in their inning. Hart Stirling being on the first base, Will Sprague hit short to Ellis, who sent the ball to Studley at second base, cutting off Stirling; and John Brubaker, in attempting to steal from first to second base, was run out by Studley and Morrison.

Nobody stirred from the field, although the day was dying slowly and the simple habits of the Catalpa women called them home to their household duties. The decisive

inning was near at hand, and as Alice stood up in her father's carriage, in order to get a better view of the game, the hitherto orderly crowd closed in around the players. Spectators and players drew a long breath as Larry Boyne went to the bat for the Jonesvilles. He wielded the bat with great skill and dexterity; but Charlie King's pitching was wonderfully clever, and Larry went out on a foul tip to Al Heaton, catcher. Morrison made third base on a safe hit; Ellis made first base and Morrison came home on a ball muffed by Charlie King, and then Martin, on a center field ball hit, brought Ellis and Wheeler home. Simpson now made first base on a hit to the right field, and an overthrow brought Martin home and gave second base to Simpson. Berthelet was caught out on a foul fly by Al Heaton, and Simpson, in attempting to steal home, was run out by Al Heaton and Will Sprague.

"Three out on the last inning!" roared two or three of the Dean County Nine, great hulking fellows, who stood near the carriage of the Judge. Alice looked at them reproachfully, although her cheeks were ruddy with half-suppressed excitement.

"It's real mean of them, isn't it, papa?" she said. "They will not seem to consider that we should be very angry if we were treated thus in Jonesville."

Now went Hiram Porter, big and handsome Hiram, to the bat for the Catalpas. Hiram looked as tall as a giant in the gathering twilight, and he stood up in manly

fashion. But Hiram was put out on first base by a ball sent by Studley to Morrison, and George Buckner, who followed him, had great ado to save himself. But he made first base, and Al Heaton next sent a singing ball to center field, on which he went to second base and Buckner to third. Ben Burton then undertook to bat Buckner home, but he was, himself, put out on first base. Lew Morris then took the bat, sent a high ball to center field and secured the first base. Charlie King followed to the first, and amidst despondent cries of "Three out!" the game and the inning ended with a score of 29 for the Jonesville Nine and 23 for the Catalpas.

Deputy Sheriff Wheeler, forgetting for the time his official dignity, stood up in what was once the judges' stand and shouted, "Three cheers for the champions of Northern Illinois! Now, then! Hip! Hip! Hip!"

The cheers were given with a pretty good will, considering how great was the disappointment of the townspeople. The captain of the Catalpas set a laudable and manly example to his comrades by going straight to Larry Boyne, the captain of the Jonesville Nine, and, grasping him warmly by the hand, congratulating him on the victory so honorably and handsomely won.

"Of course you can't expect that a fellow can say that he is glad to have lost the day; but you have worked hard for the pennant, and it belongs to you without any grumbling."

Larry, with his ruddy face still ruddier than before, responded in frank fashion and then the crowd began to melt away, for the darkness was coming on. Passing by the Judge's carriage, yet entangled in the throng of vehicles, Larry glanced up at the pretty girl whom he had noticed with distant admiration. The Judge intercepted his glance, and leaning over with what was meant to be a gracious smile, said, "This is Larry Boyne, the famous catcher of the down-river nine? Well, I congratulate you, young man, on your well-won victory and on your own beautiful playing."

Larry very much taken aback by this unexpected condescension from the great man of Catalpa, touched his cap, blushed and stammered and gladly rejoined his comrades.

"Fine young man, that," said the Judge, sententiously, as his carriage slowly drew out of the crowd and moved toward the gate.

"If a few such players as he were in the place of some of the muffs in the Catalpa Nine," said Alice, "I think that the championship of the whole State would belong in this town."

"Why I do believe my little daughter is crying!" cried the Judge.

"I am not crying," said Alice stoutly. "But I confess that I am mad enough to cry. Are we always going to be beaten by every scrubby nine that comes here, I'd like to know?"

Dr. Selby, the staid and dignified village town apothecary,

who was walking by the carriage, heard the indignant outburst, and looking up, said with a smile, "We've got the timber here for a first-class nine, Miss Alice, but the thing is to get the timber together."

Judge Howell, with his grandest manner, said, "If there is any movement to retrieve the honor of Catalpa in the base ball field, please count on my assistance and support."

## CHAPTER III.

### AFTER THE BATTLE.

TO say that the town of Catalpa was very deeply mortified by this latest and most signal defeat of the favorite Nine would be a mild way of putting the case. For weeks afterwards, nothing was talked of in the place but the disgraceful overthrow of the Catalpa Nine. Very soon, so high did the debate run, there were two sides formed among the townspeople, one party blaming the Catalpas for their lack of training and practice, and the other excusing them for their evident inability to cope with the sturdy farmer boys from "down the river."

"I tell you it is not mere brute muscle that our fellows want," said 'Squire Mead, one of the great lights of the town, "it's not brawn, but skill, that they must acquire before they can stand up against the base ball players of this part of the country. Let them pay more attention to work, and less to frills, and they will come out all right."

But Dr. Selby, whose son was one of the rising players in the less aristocratic Dean County Nine, would have none

of this sort of argument. Tom Selby was not only a wiry and agile player in the field, but he was the best oarsman on the river, and he could lift a barrel of flour, properly slung, "without turning a hair." He had done it often. His father believed in muscle.

"Now there's Bill Van Orman, the Dean County Nine's catcher," Dr. Selby would say, "who is like an ox in appearance, and I really believe could stave in the panel of that door with one blow of his fist, but who gets about the bases as spry as a cat, and who has got down the curve to such a fine point that nobody can pitch like him in half a dozen counties. Sam Ellis, the champion pitcher of the Jonesvilles, cannot hold a candle to Van's pitching. And do you pretend to tell me that any light-waisted young fellow, like Will Sprague, for instance, could ever, by all the training in the world, make such a catcher or such a pitcher as Bill?"

It was the old question over again—skill against muscle. But Judge Howell, whose opinions on all subjects whatever commanded respect, probably gave voice to the average public judgment when he said, "What we want, gentlemen, is muscle *and* training. I am confident that in this good town of Catalpa there are more than nine young men who can give time to the practice necessary for the purpose, and who are endowed by nature with the requisite powers for the development of first-rate base ball players."

"Good for you, Jedge!" It was Tony May, an aged

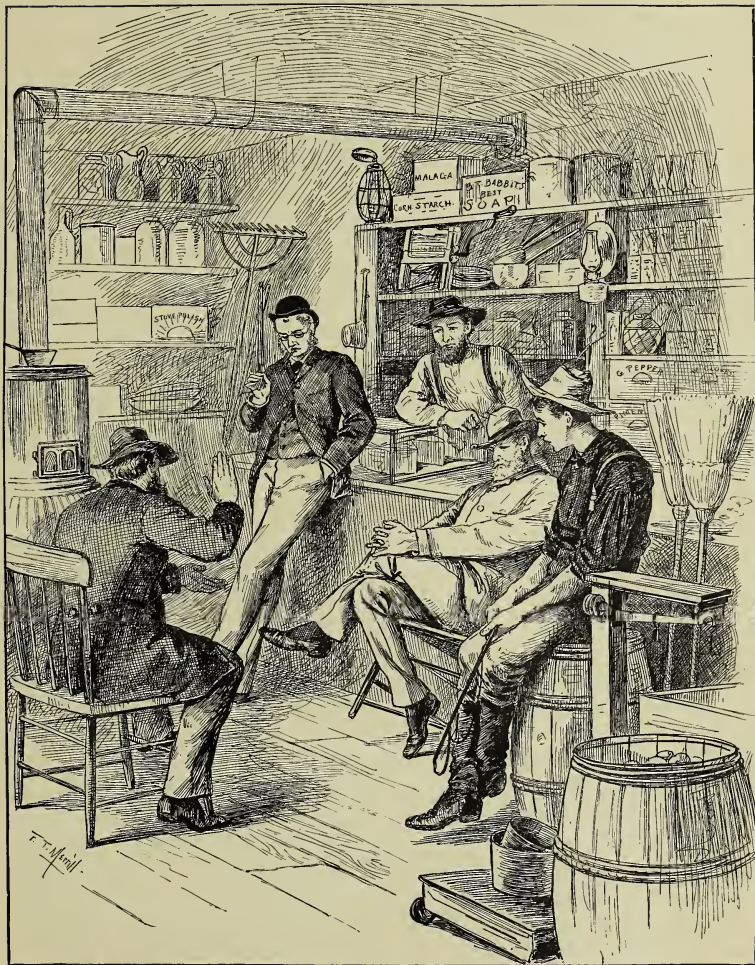
and disreputable loafer in the store where this debate was taking place, who spoke. Tony was usually called "Rough and Ready" because of his frequent use of that phrase as applied to himself. Having applauded the Judge's remark, he drew back, a little confusedly, and murmured "'Scuse me, Jedge, I didn't mean to be interruptious, but you know I'm rough and ready, rough and ready, Jedge, and that 'ere remark of yourn does seem to be about the fust sensible thing I've hearn in this 'ere jag of words. 'Scuse me, Jedge, fer sayin' so; you know I'm rough and I'm ready." And the speaker subsided into a corner pulling his 'coonskin cap down over his shaggy brows.

Judge Howell, with an additional stiffness perceptible in his manner, waved his hand towards the dry goods boxes in the angles of which "Rough and Ready" had dropped and said, "Our friend here is enthusiastic. He has a right to be. His son Fremont has certainly distinguished himself, before now, as the right fielder of the Dean County Nine. But does anybody know if that handsome young Irish lad, Larry Boyne, could be drawn from the Jonesville Nine, in case we should desire to reinforce our home nine by drafts on foreign material, so to speak?"

Nobody knew; but Jason Elderkin, the storekeeper, leaned over his counter, pausing in his occupation of measuring off a yard of Kentucky jean, and said:

"I tell you what it is, Judge, that's the likeliest young fellow in these parts. He lives with his mother over to Sugar





"WHAT WE WANT, GENTLEMEN, IS MUSCLE *AND* TRAINING."—Page 37.



Grove, and started in to read law with 'Squire Welby, over to Dean Center; but he had to give it up on account of his father's being killed by being crushed under a tree that he was felling. Awful blow to the boy, likewise to his ma. The Jonesvilles pay him something for playing with them; so I've hearn tell."

This suggestion created a momentary stir in the congress, for the gathering had by this time assumed such a character. Two or three of the speakers did not see how anybody could think of making a professional club out of an amateur, such as the Jonesville Nine pretended to be. If Larry Boyne was paid a salary, why were not others? And if salaries were paid to the men, it was a professional club, wasn't it?

"I don't know enough about what we may call the etiquette of the game to decide what is an amateur and what a professional club," remarked Judge Howell, in slow and dignified accents. "But if we are in earnest in this proposition to organize a really creditable base ball club in Catalpa, and I take it that we are,"—and here he glanced at "Rough and Ready," who had slid forward into sight again,—"and I take it that we are, I say, we may as well make up our minds to put our hands into our pockets and help the boys a little, otherwise we shall go down again."

"Right as a trivet, Judge," cried Rough and Ready. "Right as a trivet; for unless we take hold all together, we shell go down to where flour is nine dollars a bar'l and no money to buy it at that; 'scuse me, gen'lemen, but I'm rough

and ready, you know. I allow that the Jedge here speaks the senterments of the community." And the old man retreated into the depths of his 'coonskin cap.

The oracle of the grocery store was right in saying that Judge Howell spoke the sentiments of the community in regard to the necessity of taking hold in earnest and organizing a base ball club, if anything serious was to be accomplished. The project took definite shape at once.

"Why," said Weeks, the bridge-tender, who, from his position, came into contact with half of the townspeople, nearly every day, as they crossed and recrossed the river. "Why, every town north of Bloomington, as far as I know, has got a champion base ball nine, and why should Catalpa be behind the rest? That's what I want to know. And if we are to have champions, we have got to take hold and help the boys, like they do in other towns. And the very first thing I want to see done is the licking of them Jonesvilles. They are so everlastingly set up by their carrying off the pennant that they are ready to challenge all creation. So I'm told."

Around many an evening fire and in many a lounging-place in the town, the question was animatedly discussed, as autumn waned into winter, and most outdoor sports became a little unseasonable. It was decided, in that informal and irregular way with which a western community settles its internal affairs, that there must be in Catalpa a first-rate base ball nine, and that it must be organized before the spring opened.

## CHAPTER IV.

### REORGANIZATION BEGINS.

“**W**HERE now, Larry?” asked 'Squire Mead, meeting Larry Boyne, on Stone River bridge, one wintry day in November. Cold weather had set in early, and huge cakes of ice had already formed on the edge of the dam, and a light fall of snow gave promise of sleighing for Thanksgiving week, then not far off. Larry was mounted on a sorry-looking nag, borrowed from a Sugar Grove neighbor, and he carried behind him a big bundle of knitted mittens, the handiwork of his mother and sisters, to be exchanged for goods at one of the stores in town.

“Oh, I'm just going to town to trade a bit, and I have a message from Al Heaton that he and his father want to see me about joining a new base ball club to be gotten up here. Know anything about it, 'Squire?”

“Well, yes,” replied the 'Squire, “I'm told that there is something of a stir in town about the matter.” The crafty old lawyer did not say how much the stir was indebted to

him for its existence. "Quite a stir, Larry, and they do say that they will get up a new nine; even if they have to hire players to go into it."

Larry's cheeks flushed even deeper red as he replied, "There is no disgrace in hiring players to help out, I suppose, 'Squire? I was paid a share of the gate money while I was with the Jonesville Nine, and they have offered me a regular salary if I go with them next season. But I wouldn't touch a penny of it if I thought it was the least bit off-color for a fellow to take pay for his services."

"No, no," said the 'Squire, warmly, "there is nothing in that that an honorable and high-toned young fellow like you are could object to; and if I were you, I would make the very best terms I could for next year. You have been obliged to give up studying law, I hear, on account of the death of your father. If you do well in the ball-field, next summer, you might save up enough to set you right next year, so far as studying is concerned. And, between you and me and the gate-post, Al Heaton and his father are bound to have you in the new nine. So make as good a bargain for yourself as you can. Al can't play next season."

"Why, what is the matter with Al? Why can't he play any more?"

"It's mighty cold standing here talking on the bridge, Larry, and I don't know that I have any right to give Al's reasons, but I have a notion that his mother objects to his going around the country playing base ball. She's got high

and mighty airs since her Uncle George was elected to Congress from the Sangamon District, and I reckon that that is what is the matter with Al's base ball business. Pity 'tis, too, for Al is a first-rate catcher. Nobody like him, unless it is Larry Boyne," he added with a kindly smile.

Larry thanked the 'Squire, and, with a hearty "good-bye," went thoughtfully on his way across the bridge. As his steed climbed Bridge Street, Larry was conscious that he had several new ideas in his head. And when, his little errands done, he found his way to Mr. Heaton's counting-room in the mills near the dam, he had made up his mind that Jonesville had no claim on him and that he belonged no more to Jonesville than he did to Catalpa. In other words, he was in the market for employment. The mortgage on the farm must be paid off; his sisters and the little brother must be kept at school, and he had his own way to make in the world. To take one season's compensation as a base ball player would help matters at home very much. It was a gleam of hope in an otherwise gloomy outlook for the young man.

"Glad to see you, Larry," said Mr. Heaton, heartily. "Al's been waiting for you this some time, and we may as well go right to business. The boys are talking of getting up a first-class nine, and as my son cannot very well go into it, next year, he has coaxed me to turn in and help the others. And so I will, for I want to see old Catalpa come out ahead at the end of the season."



Young Heaton, with evident regret, told Larry that he would be unable to play in the Catalpa nine, but that it was his dearest wish that the club should be the champion club of the state. "So," said he, "with my father's consent, I have agreed to give my monthly allowance for the benefit of the club, and that will help make up a pool to pay expenses. We can't get good players (I mean players to compete with Chicago and Springfield, and other large cities), without paying them something—gate-money anyhow, and perhaps more."

Larry said not a word. It was yet a new proposition, this of earning money as a professional ball player. Somehow it did not strike him pleasantly. But he listened respectfully while Mr. Heaton unfolded the plans that had been slowly matured since the signal defeat of the Catalpas, last October. They must organize a new nine. Some of the old players must be dropped, and two, Al and Lewis Morris, had already declined to play any longer. New men must be found to take their places. Would Larry join the new nine? Did he recommend any other players in the vicinity?

Larry's ruddy face glowed as he walked up and down the little counting-room, thinking over the situation. Mr. Heaton watched the young man's well-knit and graceful figure with admiration, and winked at Albert, as if to say, "That is your man. Get him if you can."

"I'll consider any offer that you make in behalf of the new nine, Mr. Heaton," said Larry, "and if I were to suggest



any other players from the Jonesvilles, I should like to say a good word for Sam Morrison and Neddie Ellis. Morrison is our first base man, and Neddie is as good a pitcher as there is in the country, unless it is Charlie King. I hope your men don't think of letting out Charlie?"

"Oh, no," replied young Heaton, "they want him to stay, and he says that he'll not only stay but will give in his share of the gate-money for the use of the club. Oh, Charlie's clear grit, he is, and he'll stand by the club," said the young man, with friendly warmth, dashed with a little regret, perhaps, that family complications forbade him a similar sacrifice.

The details of the bargain could not be settled at once. Mr. Heaton and his son were the representatives of a company of public-spirited citizens who were bent on getting up a good base ball club. They could only secure Larry's promise to wait for terms from them before accepting any other engagement, and to give them some hint as to what compensation he should expect. This last, however, Larry resolutely declined to do; and, after some debate, young Heaton exclaimed, "Well, hang it all, Larry! What's the use beating round the bush! I think our folks have made up their minds that they will give you a share of the gate-money, say one eighth, and a salary of a thousand dollars for the season. Does that strike you favorably?"

Larry's eyes shone as he said, "It strikes me as being more than I am worth."

“ Well, this is all informal and entirely between us, you know,” said Mr. Heaton. “ You will keep the matter to yourself until we have reported to the rest of the committee, for there is a committee,” he added with a smile. And so the matter was concluded, and Larry, mounting his horse, with a cheery salutation to father and son standing in the mill-door, rode across the bridge into the November twilight, with a light heart.

The next day, Lewis Morris rode over to Sugar Grove to expostulate with Larry. He had heard that the Heaton had offered Larry one thousand dollars and one-eighth of the gate-money. “ Now,” said he to Larry, “ I cannot play with the nine, next season, neither can Al Heaton, and the chances are that Will Sprague will drop out, too. Charlie King does not need any pay or any income from the playing to induce him to go. So he will not want any gate-money. Geo. Buckner says he will go along as an extra man, and he will take neither salary nor gate-money. If we get Sam Morrison and Neddie Ellis, we shall have to pay them gate-money at least. But there will be, according to my figuring, only seven out of ten to draw on the gate-money, for Hiram Porter, I am sure, will decline to take anything for his services.”

Larry expressed his entire satisfaction with the terms offered him by Mr. Heaton, on behalf of the new club. He was willing to do what he could, short of any great sacrifice, to make up a strong nine. He would take less salary, or

less of the income of the club, if that were necessary to induce the best men to join it.

"That's very good of you, Larry, old boy," said Morris, heartily, "but you can't afford to waste your summer playing base ball for nothing. I want them to take Bill Van Orman from the Dean County boys. How do you think he would do?"

"First-rate! First-rate!" cried Larry, with enthusiasm. "I do not think of another fellow on the river as good as he is as catcher, unless it is Al Heaton, and he is out of the question."

"Unless it is Larry Boyne," said Morris, reproachfully. "You are a great sight better catcher than Bill Van Orman, and I should hope you would take that place if you were to go into the new Catalpa Nine.

Larry protested that he had watched Van Orman's catching for two seasons, and had made up his mind that he was the best man in that position that could be got, now that Al Heaton was out of the field. Would Van Orman serve at all?

"Oh, yes," replied Morris. "All of the Dean County boys are just wild to get into the new nine. They are willing to play for Catalpa, and they don't care whether they are in their own nine or in a new one. They drop all thoughts of rivalry, so far as the future is concerned."

As Lewis Morris cantered back from his visit to Sugar Grove, he met Cyrus Ayres, driving homeward from town, his

lumber-wagon making a great din as it rattled and rumbled over the rough, frozen road. The two young men exchanged greetings as they passed, and Cyrus call out to Lewis something which the noise of the wagon drowned; so, turning back, he said, "What was that you were saying about Bill Van Orman?"

"Oh, I only said that Bill is to be catcher in the new nine. I was in Jase Elderkin's store, just now, and he allowed that Bill would take anything the boys had a mind to give him. But Charlie King and Ben Burton said that Larry Boyne wouldn't want to serve as catcher, if he did go into the new nine, and that Bill would be the next best man, and Larry would go on one of the bases. Say first base. How's that, think ye?"

"I don't like it," said Lewis, "but we'll see what we shall see. I am willing, so far as I am concerned, to leave it all to Larry. He has got a level head, and don't you forget it."

"Right you are," responded Cyrus, as, giving the reins to his impatient team, he rattled noisily down the river road.

As he passed Judge Howell's handsome house, Lewis looked up and caught the glance of Miss Alice, who was sitting in the window-seat, curled up on a big cushion, and scribbling something that seemed to puzzle her very much. The girl wrote, re-wrote, erased and wrote again. Finally she held her work, somewhat blurred and scratchy as it was, at arm's length, and said in soliloquy,

"I really think that is the very best thing that could be done! But I wonder what I put that young Irishman's name at the head of the list for?"

With a faint pink tint suffusing her cheek, she drew a line through the name at the top of the page, wrote it at the bottom, and then laughed softly to herself. Just then Lewis Morris rode by, gallantly taking off his cap as he passed the house. If Mr. Lewis could have looked over Alice's shoulder, he would have read this list of names:

S. MORRISON, L. F.  
NEDDIE ELLIS, C. F.  
CHARLIE KING, P.  
HART STIRLING, 2d B.  
JOHN BRUBAKER, R. F.  
HIRAM PORTER, 1st B.  
BEN BURTON, S. S.  
WM. VAN ORMAN, 3d B.  
LAWRENCE BOYNE, Catcher.

Alice concealed the paper in her pocket, as she saw her father drive up the road from the bridge. Then she took it out again with a pretty little air of determination, saying to herself. "My papa knows that I am so much interested in the new nine scheme, why shouldn't I tell him that this is what I think about the re-organization?"

So, when the Judge, that night, drew his motherless child to his knee, she brought to him the list of players which she had made out.

“Perhaps you will think it mannish in me, papa,” she said, “but I have made out a list of the players in the new Catalpa nine. I have a whim that this is about the way they will be placed.”

The Judge took the crumpled and blurred paper, and running his eyes over it, said, “That is a good cast, as they say in the theaters, Alice; but don’t you think you are a little premature? The new nine is not yet formed, and until they begin to practice they can hardly tell where each player should be placed. I don’t pretend to know much about the game; not so much as my little daughter does, for example, but isn’t that about the way it strikes you?”

Alice admitted that her father was right. But she had given a great deal of thought to the matter. Everybody in the town was discussing this absorbing topic. And, out of all that she had heard, she had evolved this cast of characters, so to speak. Anticipating the story of the Catalpa nine a little, it may be said that Alice Howell’s list, although its features were known only to herself and her father, was adopted with two exceptions, Larry Boyne was chosen to the third base and Bill Van Orman took the position of catcher. But this was not done until far later in the winter, when the new nine was finally organized for the summer campaign.

## CHAPTER V.

### NOTES OF PREPARATION.

ON the ridge above the town of Catalpa stands a huge building known as "The Fair Building." When the Northern District Agricultural Fair was held in Catalpa, this structure was used for displays of mammoth squashes, women's handiwork, exhibits of flax, wheat, flour, and the other products of the fertile region of Northern Illinois. Now it was given over to desolation and neglect. The men who had helped to pay for its erection were not willing to signify by tearing it down that they had given up all hope of ever winning back to Catalpa the institution that had moved away up to the northern part of the state. Some of these days, they said, the Fair would come back to Catalpa, and then the building would be ready for the show, as of old.

The promoters of the new base ball club scheme had no difficulty in securing permission for the players to practice in the building. Accordingly, when the leisure days of

winter came on, the lads betook themselves to the lonesome and barnlike structure and warmed themselves with the exercise that pitching, catching and running made needful.

“If we had had this old ark built for us,” said Hiram Porter, whose father was one of the Directors of the Agricultural Society, “it couldn’t have been better planned. Suppose we call a ball sent up there where Marm Deyo used to spread out her wonderful bed-quilts a foul ball? And then we might imagine that the lower gallery is full of girls looking on at Larry’s scientific pitching. Gals—gallery; see?” and the boys all laughed at Hiram’s small joke, for their spirits rose as they warmed to their work.

Thither went, also, occasionally, a favored few of the townspeople who were very much waked up now over the work of the Nine that was to be the champion of the region, if not of the State. To such an extent had the men, women and children of Catalpa been aroused by what was going on, that a stranger coming into town and hearing the gossip around the street corners and in the more comfortable stores and shops, would have supposed that Catalpa was devoting itself exclusively to the practice of base ball. It was the dead of winter, and, except a few teams slowly pulling in from the outlying country, with a few farmers in quest of the necessaries of life from the town stores, very little life was visible about the place. Occasionally, a fierce snow storm would sweep over the town, blocking the streets, and cutting it off from all communication



except by railroad. The main street would be desolate, and the bridge show only a solitary passenger whom dire necessity brought out in such a cold and wintry gale as the "blizzard" proved to be.

At such times, however, up in the big Fair Building whose yawning cracks let in the driving snow, and on whose roof the shingles rattled merrily, a party of hardy and stalwart young fellows was sure to be found practicing arduously for the work of the coming summer. Around the hot stoves in the lounging-places, down town, grown men were talking of base ball, and small boys, hanging eagerly on the outer edges of the groups, drank in with silent intelligence the words of wisdom that dropped from the lips of their elders. For a time, at least, it looked as if nothing would ever be done in that town but to prepare for the base ball season of the next year.

But the winter wore away and the regular industries of the Stone River Valley began to revive. The ice went out of the river with the usual rush, and people wondered, as they always had, if the bridge would stand the pressure of the ice-flood. The roads were once more channels of bottomless mud, and eastern people, whom business errands brought out into that part of the country, sourly berated a country "in which everything depended on the state of the roads." The blue jays were calling from the tree-tops and the meadow larks were whistling along the fences. The prairies were gradually growing green, and the low places

and hollows where the snow lately lingered became shining pools reflecting the tender blue of the spring sky.

One day, Bill Van Orman, after carefully going over the Agricultural Fair Grounds in company with Al Heaton, reported that it was about time to begin practicing out of doors. For months, the members of the new nine had been wishing for the day to come when they could get out into the open air and put some of their indoor practice into actual work. So, with the assistance of a few of their associates who were not members of the new club, they organized two nines and went to work in earnest.

The long winter had borne its fruit. The talk and gossip of the town had run almost altogether to base ball. There was nobody in Catalpa, unless it was poor old Father Bickerby, who was stone deaf, who had not heard the smallest particulars of the progress of the new nine discussed. Did Larry Boyne make a particularly fine running, one-hand catch in the practice of a winter's afternoon? It was minutely described that night over a hundred tea-tables in Catalpa. Did Charlie King bewilder everybody, some day, by the dexterity and rapidity of the balls that he delivered, so that even the players, always reluctant to praise each other, applauded him? Sage old men hanging over the open fire in the drug store would say that Charlie King "would warm those Jonesvillers, next summer."

And, what was of more immediate importance, the financial arrangements necessary to start the club prosperously

on its way were perfected while the dull times of a western winter pervaded the town of Catalpa. Judge Howell, himself, with an air of great condescension, headed a list of gentlemen who agreed to give a certain sum to enable the club to carry out their campaign. Others followed the great man of the town, according to their ability. And others, again, pledged themselves to lend any sum that might be required to make up a possible deficiency. But, so many who were able to give outright to what they called "the good cause" came forward with their gifts, there was no chance for any deficiency. Since the outbreak of the war, when everybody was scraping lint, making "comforts" for the soldiers, or marching to the front, there had not been so hot a fever of enthusiasm in Catalpa.

The soldiers of this new campaign were the lusty young heroes up in the Agricultural Fair Grounds who were doing battle, every day, with imaginary foes and making ready to face the real antagonists who could not now be very far off; for the base ball season would open in a few weeks. There was a little jealousy over the choice of a captain. Gradually, the place of each man in the nine had been settled without much debate. As we have seen, the list that Alice Howell had made up, in the privacy of her own solitude, became that which the players finally fixed upon, except that Larry Boyne went to third base and Bill Van Orman took the place of catcher, instead of the positions which the fair Alice had assigned them in her draft of an ideal nine.

Ben Burton was supported for the captaincy of the club by several of the members, all of the new players, except Larry Boyne, being in favor of choosing him. Ben was a warm champion of his own claims to the place. Larry, on the other hand, modestly, but very decidedly, supported Hiram Porter for the post of Captain. He was in every way fit for it, and he and his father had done more for the new club than any others. Besides all that, the Porters held a first-rate social position in Dean County and that would count for something in the organizing of the campaign. The young men considered the withdrawal of Al Heaton, and the cause of his loss to them, and they laughed at the thought. Ben Burton was very savage at the suggestion that his family was not just as good as the Porters. What had family to do with base ball, anyway?

The discussion grew warm, after a while, and Larry and Ben were brought into sharp antagonism. There had been rumors that Larry Boyne had dared to show to Miss Alice Howell some of the little attentions with which the young swains of the region were wont to manifest their admiration for a young lady of their choice. He had even gone so far as to ask her to allow him to drive her to a little dancing party given in Darville, one of the numerous rivals of Catalpa, a little prairie town on the Rush River Railroad, twelve miles distant. Alice, warned by a suggestion from her father, who exhibited a species of panic at the bare idea of the invitation, had declined the young man's kindly offer, and had staid at

home to murmur at her hard fate. Ben Burton could not seriously cherish a belief that Larry Boyne was "paying attention" to the Judge's daughter; but he felt that he, somehow, owed him a grudge.

The impending storm, if any really did impend, blew over when it was ascertained by ballot that Hiram Porter was the choice of the club. And Hiram, who was tall, dark, strong, long of limb, handsome and skillful, was accordingly chosen captain of the Catalpa nine. Ben Burton, with some show of generous magnanimity, clapped Hiram on the back and boisterously congratulated him on his having secured the coveted honor of the captaincy. But Larry, with a manly air, said, "You'll find that all the boys will take orders from you, Hi, with as much cheerfulness as if we were soldiers in the field and you were leading them to battle. Isn't that so, fellows?"

The rest of the young men noisily and heartily asserted their allegiance to their chief, and the new club began their final preparations for the field with enthusiasm and harmonious good-will.

By the evening lamp, that night, in Judge Howell's house, the matter was discussed by the Judge and his daughter. "It is an excellent choice, Alice, my child, don't you think so?"

"Certainly, papa, but it is not of very great importance, after all, who is captain of the nine. 'The play's the thing,' as Hamlet says; isn't it Hamlet, papa?"

"I don't know about that, my little girl, I am somewhat

rusty in my Shakespeare; but the play is the thing, I suppose. Nevertheless, since social rank does not go for much in base ball, I should have been glad to see Larry Boyne made the captain of the new nine.

“Oh, papa, that was not to be thought of. He is a new recruit. Who knows how he may turn out? He may be a secret emissary from Jonesville to ‘throw the game,’ some day.”

“Bless my life!” cried the Judge, “I never thought of that.”

## CHAPTER VI.

### AN INTERESTING EPISODE.

**A**LTHOUGH the stock of the Catalpa Base Ball Club was divided among many share-holders in the town of Catalpa, it was evident that the mere holding, or non-holding, of shares made no difference with those who were engaged in the active duties of playing. To be sure, the nine had not yet begun their summer campaign. The first of April was early enough for the beginning of outdoor practice, and active work in the field would not open until the first of May; but enough had been done, in the preliminary organization and preparing for the summer's work, to test the temper of the members of the club. It was not a purely business-like venture into which these young men had gone for the purpose of making capital or money for themselves. They were burning to retrieve the reputation of "Old Catalpa" as they called their town, albeit it was one of the youngest in Northern Illinois.

And so, as Larry Boyne and Al Heaton were sitting on

the rail fence that encloses the Court House of Dean County, in Catalpa, discussing the future prospects of the club, both were confidential and intimate in their exchange of opinions concerning the members of the nine.

"No, I tell you that you are wrong, Al, in your estimate of Ben Burton," said Larry, earnestly. "I do not think that I could be prejudiced against Ben; and I try to judge him fairly; and so I cannot bring myself to believe that he would be tricky, or that he would undertake to play any foul game on me, or on anybody else, for that matter. He is sullen and moody, at times, and I know that he took to heart his defeat as candidate for captain of the club. I know that he don't like me, although I don't know why he should dislike me, as he certainly does."

"Pooh! Larry," was Albert's frank reply, "you know well enough that he fancies that you are in his way as a suitor for the hand of a certain young lady, whose name shall not be mentioned even in this very select society. He knows that that young lady smiles on you in the most bewitching way, and he knows—"

"Oh, see here, Al," interrupted Larry, with flaming cheeks, "you are riding your horse with a free rein, don't you think so? I have no right to think of any young lady with the seriousness you seem to put into the matter. I am young, poor, and without friends or influence."

"Hold on there, Larry," cried young Heaton, warmly. "You have no right to say that. You will never want for



friends. You have a town-full of them, and when you need any one to stand by and back you up in anything you undertake, you can just put out your hand, without getting off of this rail, to find one friend that will be the man to stand right there as long as he is wanted."

Larry laid his hand on Albert's knee as he said, "I know that, Al, and it is good to know it and to have you say it in that straightforward way of yours, and I will say too, that your father called me into the mill, the other day, and said pretty much the same thing to me; and he told me that he should consider it a favor, or something of that sort, if I would allow him to have a fatherly lookout for the folks at home, while I am off, this summer, in case anything should happen." And Larry's honest blue eyes filled with moisture as he looked far off over the outlying prairie, in the vain effort to conceal how deeply he had felt the kindness showed to him.

"That was very good of the Governor, I'm sure," said Albert, stoutly, "and I don't care if he is my father of whom I am saying it. But it's nothing more than fair for him, and for the rest of us who stay at home, to do what we can to keep your mind at ease about your folks while you are out in the ball field for the summer. But what I was getting at is this: Ben Burton is down on you; he will try to get the advantage of you, if he can; and, what is of more consequence to all of us, he would not scruple to bring the whole club into disgrace for the sake of gratify-

ing any selfish purpose that he might happen to have in view."

"But what evil purpose could he have?" demanded Larry.

"As I said before, I don't know. I don't want to do Ben an injustice, but I do know that he is underhanded and mean. So you look out for him. As far as his relations to you are concerned, I might say, if you were not so everlastingly toploftical about it, that he is jealous of you on account of your supposed good standing with Alice Howell—"

"Oh, hush-h-h-h!" cried Larry, looking around in unfeigned consternation, to see if there were listeners near. "You really must not mention that young lady's name in that manner, nor in any manner connected with my own. It would be almost insulting to her, it would fill the Judge with wrath (and I shouldn't blame him for being angry), to know that gossiping young fellows like us were using his daughter's name in this light fashion."

"And why, I should like to know?" answered Albert. "He need not put on any high and mighty airs. I have heard my father say that when the Howellses came here from Kentucky, when the Stone River country was first settled, and old man Hixon was running his ferry across the stream here, they were so poor that they wore bed-ticking clothes, went barefoot, and lived on hog and hominy for many a year afterwards. Side-meat was good enough for them then,

The fat of the land is not good enough for them now. It just makes me sick! Such airs!" And honest Albert got down from the fence to give freer expression to his deep disgust.

Larry went away from this casual meeting with his stanch friend Albert with a sense of depression. His nature was unsuspecting and he chose to think that all men were as honest and as frank as he certainly was. Young Heaton's talk had shaken his faith in human nature as far as that was represented in one man—Ben Burton, the open-eyed and bluff Ben Burton. No wonder Larry repelled Al Heaton's notion that Ben "was not altogether square" and should be watched.

Larry was to stop at Armstrong's blacksmith shop, on the north side, on his way home, to have his horse shod. So, as he was leading the animal across the bridge, lost in thought and dwelling somewhat darkly on his conversation with Al Heaton, he did not notice that a young lady, very charmingly dressed and daintily booted and gloved, was tripping along toward him from the opposite side of the river, in the foot-walk that skirted the lower side of the rickety old wooden bridge. He did not look up until his steed, never very easily startled out of a heavy and slouching gait, jumped wildly at a sudden flash from a sky-blue parasol which the young lady deliberately shook at him.

"Whoa, Nance!" cried Larry, astonished at the beast's

unprecedented skittishness, "you old fool!" but here he stopped, for his eyes fell on the bewitching apparition on the other side of the timbered rail, and he colored deeply red as he beheld Miss Alice ready to giggle at his confusion.

"Good day, Mr. Boyne," said the girl, "I am glad I have met you. I wanted to ask you how the club is getting along, and if you think you will be in good condition for the coming season. To be sure, papa tells me that he has every confidence in your success; but then, papa is hardly a judge in base ball matters, you know, although he has learned a great deal lately, and so have many other people, and they all seem very confident; but the wish is father to the thought, you know, and so I thought I would like to see some one in whose judgment and candor I could put a great deal of confidence, a very great deal, you know, and see what he thinks about the prospect before us. I say 'us,' you see, because it is a sort of town matter. Now isn't it?"

The young lady had rattled on in a random manner, as if she was giving time for Larry to recover himself. Certainly, he needed time. He was covered with blushes, not altogether becoming, for his natural color was quite deep enough for all artistic considerations. But as he stood there, cap in hand, the river breeze lightly lifting his brown curls and fanning his hot cheeks, the maiden's bright eyes rested on the picture with a certain sense of satisfaction, and she said to her most secret and hidden inner self that



"I WANTED TO ASK YOU HOW THE CLUB IS GETTING ALONG."—Page 64.



there were very few handsomer young men in the region than he who stood before her.

Larry, laying his brown hand on the timber guard that capped the railing betwixt them, said, "You startled me so, Miss Alice, that I almost forgot my manners; and I haven't much. Oh, you wanted to know about the prospects of the Catalpa Nine? Well, I do not think it would be wise to build many hopes on the future until we have met at least one of the best nines of the country about us. Some of our friends think we are going to sweep the deck. Excuse the expression. And some are even talking of our being the champion nine of the state."

"Why," said the girl, "don't you hope for the championship? Is not that what you are going out to get?"

"Of course, Miss Alice, we hope for everything that is in sight, as the saying is; but we cannot expect, with any sort of reason, for so great success as that during our very first season. The matches are now nearly all made up for the coming season, and if we were never so good players, we should have no chance for the championship, I am afraid."

"I never thought of that," said Alice. "What an awful lot you know about base ball. But then that is because you are a man. My papa says that girls have no business learning about base ball. Now what do you think, Mr. Boyne?"

"I am not used to being called 'Mr. Boyne' for one



thing," replied Larry, gallantly, "and I should feel very much honored indeed if Miss Howell would remember that I am only 'Larry' the new third base man of the Catalpa Nine."

The heavy rumble of a farm wagon driving up on the down end of the bridge at that moment warned Larry that he must get out of the way. So, with a few concise words as to the all-absorbing topic of the day, he bowed, replaced his cap, and passed on to North Catalpa.

Sal Monnahan drove the sorrel horses that now came pounding along the wooden way. When she reached her home in Oneosho Village, that evening, she informed her nearest neighbor that she had seen "Larry Boyne lallygagging with that high-strung darter of Judge Howell's, on the North Catalpa bridge, that arternoon, and then when the gal came off she looked as if she had been talking with her sweetheart, her eyes were so shiny, just like dimonds, and her cheeks were as red as a poppy in the corn. It do beat all how that young Irish feller gets on with folks in town. Gals and fellers—all the same."

As for Larry, he went across the bridge, leading his nag, and walking so lightly that it seemed to him that his steps were in the air. While Armstrong was shoeing the horse and chatting the while with Larry, he thought within himself that this was a particularly fine young fellow, and that it was a pity that he was poor. Presently his thoughts took shape and he said:



"Don't you think you are too smart a chap, Larry, to waste your time playing base ball?"

"I am not going to waste much time playing, Tom. I know enough about base ball to know that a player doesn't last as a good player more than ten or twelve years. He is too young to play before he is seventeen years old, and he is done for and is dropped out by the time he is thirty. So if I had any notion of making ball-playing my calling in life, I should have that fact in view to warn me. Oh, no Tom, I am only making this a bridge to carry me over a hard place."

"That's good sense. I was afraid you were going off with the base ball fever, and so never be fit for anything else. That's what will become of some of those young kids over in town who don't think of anything, from morning till night, but base ball. I always thought you had more sense into you than most of the boys around here. You are older than your years, Larry," and the plain-speaking blacksmith looked admiringly in the young man's face, "older than your years."

"Older than your years." These words rang in Larry's ears as he swung himself lightly into his saddle and ambled down the river road to Sugar Grove.

The blacksmith looked after him and muttered to himself, "He is smart enough to be anything in the way of a lawyer that there is in these parts. And if he were to cast sheep's eyes on the Judge's daughter, or on anybody else's daughter,

for that matter, I just believe he would win her in time. He's got such a taking way with him." And honest Thomas Armstrong resumed his work with a mild glow of pleasure stealing through him as he thought of Larry Boyne and his possibilities.

## CHAPTER VII.

### IN THE FIELD.

IT was an impressive occasion when the Catalpa club started on their first pilgrimage. They had arranged a practice game with the Black Hawk Nine, of Sandy Key, in the central part of the State, to begin the season with. Other games were arranged for later work, but this match, which was partly for practice, and partly to test the material of the new nine, was felt to be one of the most important. From Sandy Key the Nine were to go to Bluford to play the famous "Zoo-zoo Nine," as they called themselves, of that city, and then they were to begin a struggle for the championship of Northern Illinois with the Red Stockings of Galena. How much depended on the result of the meeting of the Black Hawks and the Catalpas, you who have followed the career of a base ball nine can best reckon.

In Catalpa, at least, the game would be watched with great, although distant, interest and absorption. Two or

three of the more active promoters of the Base Ball scheme were to go down to Sandy Key, which is on the Illinois Central Railroad, to witness the struggle of their favorite champions with the strangers. The Black Hawks were renowned as fielders. They had acquired a reputation that inspired terror among the base ball players of the southern portion of the state; and when it was noised abroad that a new nine from Dean County, heretofore unknown in the Diamond Field, had actually challenged the Black Hawks, experienced amateurs and professional players made remarks about the assurance of the new men from the North that were not intended to be complimentary or encouraging.

The Catalpas had adopted blue as their standard color, and a uniform of blue and white, with a pennant of white, edged and lettered with blue, carried the colors of the club into new and untried fields. Great was the enthusiasm of the townspeople when the club, packed into two big omnibuses, with their friends, finally departed for the railway station, which was on the outer and upper edge of the town. A vast number of sympathizing friends and well-wishers attended the party to the station, and those who remained in town watched with a certain impressiveness the coming train as it skirted North Catalpa, crossed the tall trestle work that spanned the river below the town and finally disappeared in the grove of trees near the depot.

It had been told all abroad that the new nine was to make its first sally on that train, and the jaded and dusty

passengers from the North looked from the windows with languid interest as the lusty young fellows made a final rush for the cars, followed by the irregular cheers of the bystanders and accompanied by a goodly number of their old associates who were "going to see fair play." The conductor, with an affectation of indifference that he did not feel, disdained to look at the surging and animated crowd, but turned his face toward the engine, waved his hand, and shouted "all aboard!" just as if he did not carry Catalpa and its fortunes with him. The train rolled away, innumerable handkerchiefs and caps waving from its windows, and hearty and long resounding cheers flying after it. A cloud of yellow dust, a hollow rumble of the train on the culvert beyond, a tall column of blackness floating from the engine over the woods, and the Catalpa Nine were gone.

"I never felt so wrought up in all my life," said Alice Howell, confidentially, to her friend Ida Boardman, as they descended the hill toward the town. "It seems, sometimes, as if I was sure that our Nine would win, and then, again, I am almost certain that they will be beaten by the Black Hawks. I saw the Black Hawks play the Springfields, last summer, and they were glorious players; such fielding! Oh, I am almost sure they will out-field our boys."

"If our nine were all like that Larry Boyne; why, isn't he just splendid? If they were all like him, I should have no fears for Catalpa. And then there's Hiram Porter, how beautifully he does handle the bat! Don't you think

Larry Boyne is the handsomest young fellow in the Nine, Alice?"

Alice colored, she knew not why, as she made answer: "I don't see what good looks have to do with playing. You are so illogical, Ida. What do you think of Ben Burton, for example. Don't you think he is handsome enough to make a good player?"

"Ben Burton! why he is perfectly horrid, and so disagreeable and high and mighty in his ways. I detest him, and if anybody loses the game, to-morrow, I hope it will be he. No, I take that back, for I cannot bear to think that anybody will lose the game for our Nine. Do you, Ally?"

Alice agreed most heartily with her friend that it would be a strange and lamentable catastrophe if the game at Sandy Key should be lost by the Catalpas.

"But I am afraid, I am afraid," the girl repeated as the twain slowly paced down the plank walk leading to the town. Her words were re-echoed, that day, many times by the people of Catalpa who would have given a great deal if "the boys" could have been thereby assured of success on the morrow.

Meantime, as the train was speeding onward, the nine were in high spirits and full of fun. For a time, at least, their thoughts were with those left behind rather than with the unknown adversaries that were before them. They were too young and buoyant to borrow trouble. Their spirits rose as they plunged forward into new scenes, and all suggestions

of possible defeats were left unheeded for to-day. Only Larry, "older than his years," felt a little foreboding at the entrance of this most important crisis of his young life. But his cheery face showed no sign of distrust or anxiety. He was, as usual, the center of a lively and talkative group of his comrades. He wore in his button-hole a delicate knot of flowers which had come there so mysteriously that none of the noisy fellows about him could guess who had put it there.

"Who is she? Why didn't we see her?" queried the laughing boys as they pressed around Larry, affecting to sniff great delight from his nosegay. Larry's face beamed as he told them that this was a reminder that every Irishman must do his duty, and that he was going to carry the little bouquet to the field of victory for the Catalpas.

"Those pansies grew in Judge Howell's garden," said Ben Burton, surlily, from his seat. Larry's eyes flashed at the covert insult that he thought he saw under Ben's sneer. But he said not a word.

"For shame, Ben Burton!" cried Al Heaton, "for shame to call names like that!"

There was a little cloud over the sun for a fleeting moment. But Larry's bright face and cheery voice soon dispelled the transient shadow, and the talk was turned into merrier channels. Ben Burton grumbled to himself, and, as he saw how his fellows clustered around Larry, whose brown and shining curls were only now and again visible among the lads who pranced about him, he said to Bill Van

Orman, "Thinks he's the biggest toad in the puddle; don't he, Bill?" Bill, whose nickname was "The Lily," because he was so big, and red, and beefy, only opened his eyes in surprise.

The telegraph office in Catalpa was in the second story of Niles's building, a brick structure on the main street of the town and chiefly occupied by lawyers and doctors. The narrow stairway was found too narrow for the throngs of people who flocked thither, next day, to learn the news from the contest in Sandy Key. Arrangements had been made by *The Catalpa Leaf*, the only daily paper in the place, to publish bulletins from the base ball ground, as fast as received. To all inquirers, Miss Millicent Murch, "the accomplished lady operator," as the local newspapers called her, stiffly replied that the telegraph office had no news to give away and that the editor of *The Leaf* would distribute his intelligence as soon as received.

Even to so great a personage as Judge Howell, who early appeared in search of information, the young lady gave her one unvarying answer. But public excitement ran high when, about two o'clock in the afternoon, a despatch from Al Heaton was received by his father, saying that the game had been called and that "the boys were in tip-top condition." Mr. Heaton signified his intention of staying at the office or thereabouts, until the game was over, in order to receive Al's despatches.

"Is Albert going to send despatches from the ball



ground, all day, Mr. Heaton?" asked Alice Howell, who, with sparkling eyes, was eagerly waiting for news from the absent company.

"Indeed he is, Alice," said Mr. Heaton. "That is what he went down to Sandy Key for, and I think you know my boy well enough to believe that he will keep us informed. Al is as much of an enthusiast in base ball matters as you and I are, my dear, and if he is alive and well we will hear from him until the fortunes of the day are decided." Mr. Heaton smiled in a kindly way as he looked down into the bright face of the young lady, and added, "And I believe and hope that he will send us a pleasant message before the day is done. Depend upon that."

"I hope so too, Mr. Heaton," Alice replied, with a slight cloud passing over her countenance, "but somehow, I feel as if we were to be defeated this time. I don't know why. But that is my superstitious notion about it."

Meantime, the telegraph machine had been industriously ticking and Miss Millicent writing as industriously, while the bystanders were talking in low tones.

"A message for Mr. Heaton," said the operator, with perfect composure, as she folded and placed in an envelope, duly addressed, a telegraph despatch which she handed to Mr. Heaton.

"Hateful old thing!" murmured Miss Ida Boardman, "she has had that message all the time and said nothing about it until she got good and ready."

"Hush!" said Alice, in a sort of stage whisper, "let us hear the news."

Mr. Heaton, having glanced hurriedly over the despatch, cried, "Good news from the boys! Hear this!" A dead silence prevailed in the office as the beaming miller read:—

*Hurrah for our side! First two innings over. Catalpas score two. Black Hawks none. Great excitement in Sandy Key. Everything lovely.*

ALBERT.

"Hooray!" broke from many lips, and the waiting crowd below the windows, hearing the cry, took it up and a fusillade of irregular and scattering hurrahs scattered along the street. Judge Howell, who had lingered during the noonday recess of his court, admonished the crowd that the lady at the telegraph desk would be embarrassed by the confusion, whereupon the company went out and added their joy to that of the assemblage that crowded around a bulletin that was at once posted by the door of *The Catalpa Leaf* office.

"What did I tell you, Alice," said Miss Ida, regardless of the fact that she had told her nothing. "Didn't I say that the Catalpas would win?"

"But the game has only just begun," said Alice. "I am still hoping and fearing, and I am not going to be put off of my base, so to speak, by the first news which happens to be good. Only two innings, Ida; remember that."

The cheering of the small boys and the excited comments

of the still smaller girls, however, proved infectious. One would think that a great battle had been fought, and that victory was already assured to the household troops. The dry-goods man laid down his yard-stick; the carpenter dropped his plane, and even the old bridge-tender forsook his post long enough to stroll into the nearest barber-shop and ask for the news from "the boys" in Sandy Key.

"Another bulletin!" cried Hank Jackson, the burly short stop of the Dean County Nine, as the tall form of Mr. Heaton emerged from the telegraph office. This time, the face of the ardent champion of Catalpa's prowess was not illuminated by a smile. Mounting a convenient dry-goods box, he announced that two more innings had been played and that the score then stood two and two, the Black Hawks having made two runs, and the Catalpas having added nothing to their score. A blank silence fell on the assemblage and Henry Jackson vengefully planted his big fist, with a tremendous thud, upon the short ribs of a side of beef that hung from the door-way of Adee's butcher shop. "That for the Black Hawks," he muttered, with clenched teeth.

But a great triumph was in store for the friends of the absent sons of Catalpa. Even while Alice Howell was trying to cheer her despondent friend Ida with the suggestion that the game was "yet young," the Editor of *The Leaf*, whose despatches were sent to him across the street in a flying box attached to a wire, put his dishevelled head out

of his office window and excitedly cried, "Three cheers for the Catalpa Nine! Fifth inning, Catalpas, five; Black Hawks, one!"

There was something like a little groan for the discomfited Black Hawks and then a wild yell broke out for the home nine. The small boys hurraed shrilly and lustily, and even the street dogs, sharing in the general joy, barked noisily and aimlessly around the edges of the crowd. Miss Anstress Howell, scanning the joyful mob from the windows of her brother's office, remarked to herself, with aggravated sourness, that it was perfectly ridiculous to see Alice mixing herself up there in the street with a lot of lunatics who were making themselves absurd over a pesky base ball game, away down in Sangamon County. It was unaccountable.

Judge Howell, sitting on his judicial bench in the courthouse on the hill, heard the pother in the town below and covertly smiled behind his large white hand to think that the home nine was undoubtedly doing well in Sandy Key.

Once more the traditional enterprise of the daily press vindicated itself with the earliest news, and Editor Downey put out of his office window his uncovered head, every hair of which stood up with excitement, as he bawled, "Sixth inning, Catalpas, none; Black Hawks, two. Seventh inning, no runs scored."

"Now you yoost keep your big fists out of my beef!" said Jake Adee, with his wrathful eye fixed on Hank



"THREE CHEERS FOR THE CATALPA NINE."—Page 78.



Jackson, who was looking around for some enemy to punch. There was depression in the crowd, but Alice Howell smiled cheerfully in the rueful face of Mr. Heaton and said that she felt her spirits rising. She was getting more confident as the rest of the party became despondent.

The innings had been made rapidly. Scarcely an hour had passed, and, so intense was the interest in the game, that everybody thought the despatches had trodden upon each other in their hurry to tumble into Catalpa. It was a warm, bright day, and the prairie wind blew softly down the hill above the town. To look into the knots of people standing about the street corners, one would suppose that it was an August noon. Everybody was perspiring. It was a warm engagement down there in Sandy Key where the boys were vigorously doing battle for the honor of old Catalpa. But it seemed even hot in the town where the people waited for the news.

So when Mr. Heaton, radiant with joy, and without waiting to come down the stairs of the telegraph office, put his leg and his head out of the window of the building and cried "Good news again!" everybody stood breathless. As Miss Anstress Howell afterwards remarked, with disdain, one might have heard a pin drop.

*Victory! victory! Eighth inning, Catalpas, nine; Black Hawks, none. Glory enough for one day. Your loving son,*

*ALBERT:*



Then went up a shout that reached the jury in the case of the County of Dean against Jeremiah Stowell, shut up in the close room provided in the court-house for jurors and other criminals, and which startled Judge Howell, who, looking out of the window from his private room, beheld his daughter, flushed and almost tearful with joy, hurrying across the court-house green, eager to tell her father the good news. The solitary horse-thief in the jail heard that hurrah and wondered if relief was coming to him from his long-delayed accomplices. Dr. Everett, reining his sturdy steed at the next street corner above the telegraph office, asked a wandering small boy what had happened, but got no answer, for the urchin was off like a shot to tell his mates who were bathing prematurely down under the mill dam. And careful housewives, making ready their early suppers, in houses beyond the railroad track, heard the yell of triumph, and softly laughed to be told in this far-off way that the Catalpa nine were victorious over their adversaries in Sandy Key.

The game was virtually decided. The ninth and last inning showed one run for the Catalpas and a "goose egg" for the Black Hawks. There was more cheering in the street under the windows of the telegraph office. Somebody suggested that the flag should be hoisted on the Court House, but fears of Judge Howell's displeasure and veto prevailed, and the proposition fell dead. Hiram Porter's father, however, raised the stars and stripes over the Catalpa House of which he was proprietor. Editor Downey flung out from his third story



window the red bunting with the white Catalpa Leaf that symbolized his standard sheet to the world below.

Later on, when the wild shower of despatches from Al Heaton, Hiram Porter, and others of the home nine, had ceased for a time, this bulletin appeared on the board of *The Catalpa Leaf*.

A GLORIOUS VICTORY FOR OUR NINE! OLD CATALPA TO THE FRONT!

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
CATALPAS . . . . .	2	0	0	0	5	0	0	9	1	=17.
BLACK HAWKS . . . . .	0	0	0	2	1	2	0	0	0	=5.

*First Base by errors*, CATALPAS, 8; BLACK HAWKS, 1.

*Earned Runs*, CATALPAS, 7; BLACK HAWKS, 1.

*Struck out*, CATALPAS, 2; BLACK HAWKS, 5.

*Our esteemed fellow citizen, Benjamin F. Burton, especially distinguished himself with his fine play at short stop, and Larry Boyne, of Sugar Grove, did some of the most brilliant work in the game, having made the highest number of runs of any man in the Nine, and being 'like lightning' as a third base man. Great excitement prevails in Sandy Key, but our men have been treated with distinguished courtesy by the citizens. The receipts at the gate were nearly \$1,000.*

When Al Heaton came home, next day, he was the hero and oracle of the hour. By reflection, he was shining with the honors of the Catalpa Nine. Wherever he went about

the town, he was sure to become the center of an admiring knot of fellow-citizens and small boys, eager to learn how the absent ball-players bore themselves in the arena at Sandy Key.

"I tell you what it is, fellows," said Albert, "you should have seen 'The Lily,' as they call Bill Van Orman, get on the home base in the fifth inning. He never stopped to look for the ball. He seemed to have eyes in the back of his head, and just as he was on the point of being caught out, when he was at least ten feet from the home base, he gave a lunge and threw himself flat on his stomach, ploughed up the turf as he plunged forwards, and, reaching out, grabbed the bag with his hands before he could be put out. Ten feet did I say? Well, I should say it was nearer fifteen feet. And you should have seen 'The Lily's' track where he scooted along that turf."

"The *Leaf's* correspondent telegraphed that Ben Burton covered himself all over with glory," remarked Jason Elderkin. "How was that?"

"Well, you see that Ben, being at short stop, had many opportunities to do good work, and he put in some very fine licks at different times. For instance, in the first play he put out Harris, the Black Hawk's pitcher, after having muffed the ball, and then picked it up on the run. Everybody said it was one of the best infield plays of the day. And in the eighth inning, he made a beautiful run, stealing two bases just as easy as falling off a log. Oh, I tell

you, Ben is a first-rate player, and they say that the Captain of the Chicago Calumets was down there and wanted to know if Ben would go into their Nine, next season. Ben was very high and mighty about something, and I guess that that was what was the matter with him. He was very much set up about something."

The mention of the famous Calumets evoked much enthusiasm among the base ball connoisseurs of Catalpa, and it was noised about the town that that club might be induced to accept a challenge from the Catalpa Nine. Albert Heaton, when asked what he thought of the possibility of such an event, shook his head.

"I tell you what, Doctor," he said to Dr. Selby, "we all thought it pretty cheeky in our boys to accept a challenge from the Black Hawks, and it is astonishing that we got out of the scrape as well as we did. To be sure, we came off with flying colors, and we have made a great reputation, that is to say, the boys have, for I am not in the Nine. But the Calumets are the champions of the State, and I suppose they will be to the end of the season; to the end of the chapter, unless something very unexpected happens. I guess our boys had better be contented with the laurels they will win outside of Chicago, this year, at any rate."

But that very day while Albert was strolling across the bridge with Miss Alice Howell, and pouring into her ear a glowing account of Larry Boyne's prowess in the field at Sandy Key, he told her, in the strictest confidence,

that the Catalpas would never be satisfied until they had measured their strength with the famous Chicago nine, the Calumets.

Alice's eyes sparkled, whether with the excitement stirred by Albert's narrative of Larry's exploits, or at the prospect of so bold a dash for fame as that proposed by the Catalpas, it is not easy to say. The young girl's ardor cooled when she considered the chances against the success of the Catalpas in so unequal a contest.

"I did not believe that we should beat the Black Hawks," said she. "I was almost sure that we should be defeated, and when the tide began to turn in favor of the Catalpas, I could not bring myself to believe that we were actually going to carry off the honors of the day. It was a famous victory, to be sure, and I hope that the Nine will be able to do as well through the season, and then, if all goes well, another season may see them pitted against the best nine in the state, even the best in the country; who knows? They have made a glorious beginning, haven't they, Albert?"

Of course this was conceded by so fast a friend of the absent Nine as Al Heaton certainly was, and it was also clear to even an impartial observer that the Nine had made something of a name for themselves, at the very outset of their career, by defeating the Black Hawks, a Nine of established reputation, victors in many fields.

"What would you think if our nine were to play the

Calumets, papa?" asked Alice that night, as they lingered over the tea-table.

"Think?" said the Judge. "I should think that it was a great piece of assurance."

"So should I!" replied Alice; "but I wish they could do it."

## CHAPTER VIII.

### A TURN OF THE TIDE.

DEFEAT, utter and overwhelming, followed the Catalpas to Bluford, where they played the "Zoo-Zoo Nine" of that city. The "Zoo-Zoos" were picked players, the lineal descendants of a company of Illinois Zouaves renowned in the Civil War for their bravery, dash, and skill as skirmishers. The original founders of the club had long since disappeared from the field of action, but their successors bore up the banner of their illustrious namesakes with infinite credit. None of the Catalpa people had gone to Bluford to witness the game, Al Heaton being sick at home and the other immediate friends of the Nine being too busy with their farms and merchandise. And so it happened that the only news that came to the town from Bluford dribbled in from the Keokuck evening papers, sent by wire to the editor of *The Catalpa Leaf*, late at night. Mr. Downey did not think it worth while to post on his bulletin board the discouraging news that the "Zoo-Zoo Nine" had beaten

the Catalpas by a score of eleven to one. But the news got out, of course, for the whole town was on the alert to hear the result from Bluford.

Albert Heaton was sitting up in bed, alternately shaken with ague and parched with fever, when his little sister brought him the unwelcome tidings. He groaned aloud and asked if Alice Howell had heard the news. Mrs. Heaton, a motherly woman who had no patience with base ball players that go about the country, like circus-riders, remarked, with some asperity, that she should suppose that Judge Howell would put a stop to Alice's giving so much time and attention to base ball. For herself, if she had a grown-up daughter, she would try and put something else into her head than base ball and such mannish and vulgar doings. If Alice's mother was alive, it would be mighty different in the Howell family. As it was, the Judge allowed Alice to do just about as she pleased, and it was a shame, so it was, for a nice young girl like Alice to be permitted to make a tom-boy of herself. Flirting with that young Irish fellow from Sugar Grove! Did anybody ever hear of the like?

"Oh, mother," sighed poor Albert. "If you only knew how sick and sore I am for the boys, you would let up on Larry. If you had let me go with the Nine, perhaps I might have helped them out of the defeat. At any rate, it might have been less of a clean-out than it is. Dear me! How cold I am! Cover me up and let me be."

With a pang of remorse at having added unwittingly to Albert's sufferings, his mother soothed the sick boy and left him to sorrowful meditations. "And I was fool enough to think that the boys would be able to challenge the Calumets." With these repentant meditations, Albert sunk into a feverish and uneasy sleep. He might have dreamed (perhaps he did) that at that very moment, Alice Howell was looking out into the gloom of the moist summer night and lamenting with bitterness the defeat of "our nine."

Next day, when *The Leaf* came out, and fuller particulars of the game were made known in a despatch from Charlie King, there was nothing to mitigate the gloom of the friends of the Catalpas. Singularly enough, some of the Dean County Nine, who had been among the most enthusiastic "boomers" of the Catalpa Nine, now assumed a most discouraging attitude. They were sure, so they said, that the Catalpas would be defeated all along the line. They had won the game at Sandy Key by a scratch. They had found their true level in Bluford. They would be beaten along the river, for it was well known that the nines in the river towns were far ahead of those in the interior of the state.

Something of this talk reached the ears of Al Heaton, who was still suffering from fever-and-ague. He took up his bottle of cholagogue and shook it at his terrified little brother (who had retailed the gossip of the drug store, where he had been sent on an errand), and said, "If you hear any such infernal nonsense as that, down town, Dan,



you go and tell Tom Selby that I want him to lick the first fellow that says anything against our nine. Do you mind me?"

Little Dan promised stoutly that he would give Tom the message. Whether he did or not, it came to pass that Henry Jackson and Thomas Selby had a discussion, that very night, and that Dr. Selby sent his son home with strict injunctions to cover his face with brown paper and vinegar, while the big-fisted Henry went to bed with a bit of raw beef on his eye.

There is nothing like news from the field of battle to bring out the partisan feelings of a community far from the scene of strife. Catalpa was stirred to its very depths by the ill tidings brought from Bluford. Those who disapproved of base ball asserted themselves in the most unexpected and exasperating manner. Nobody had suspected that there were in Catalpa so many who sympathized not with the home nine and who secretly wished that they might be defeated. But the fact that the nine had met with disaster only stimulated their friends to new courage and stronger hopes for the future. This was a time, they said, for the friends of the nine to show themselves. Mr. Heaton sent an encouraging despatch to Larry Boyne, assuring him that the temporary reverse had only strengthened the confidence of home friends of the club. Even Judge Howell, who was greatly concerned lest the nine should be unduly depressed by their reverses, authorized Lewis Morris to write to Hiram Porter,

as Captain of the club, and say to him that the club must be prepared for occasional defeats and that the next news from "the front" would undoubtedly be inspiring to the many supporters of the Catalpas.

"The Judge is a brick!" said Larry Boyne, when this message was read to the members of the club, as they lounged in one of the bed-rooms of Quapaw House, in Galena, where the boys were waiting to begin the championship series of games with the Red Stockings.

"That's just what he is!" exclaimed "The Lily," bringing his somewhat battered fist down with emphasis on a convenient pillow. Bill had had hard luck in the late contest. His fingers had been badly sprained and twisted, and he had played with infinite difficulty on account of the battering that he had received in a game played with the Fulton City Nine, when the Catalpas were on their way to Bluford from Sandy Key. But he was still confident and determined.

"I suppose some of the folks at home think that we are going to get beaten right along, every day from this out," he continued, with a scornful laugh. "They don't know us, do they, Larry? They don't know what we had to contend with in Bluford, what with being used up with that hard ride on the strap-iron railroad and the lame fingers of your humble servant. Oh, yes, I suppose there is downheartedness among the boys at home."

"But I know one chap who is not downhearted," said

Larry Boyne, cheerfully, "and that is Al Heaton. He will never get discouraged, whatever happens. And then there is his father, his despatch shows where he stands. Al is clear grit and so is his father; you may depend on that, boys."

Ben Burton, who had virtually lost the game in Bluford by his repeated muffing of the ball, as well as by his failure at the bat, sneered as he said, "I suppose a certain young lady in North Catalpa prompted the Judge's despatch, didn't she, Larry?"

Larry, with reddening cheeks, protested that he had no idea that Judge Howell needed any prompting from anybody to send a good word to the boys when they were away from home; he was too kind-hearted a man, although a little stiff, to require any hint from outsiders to do the fair thing by the Base Ball Club in whose welfare he had already shown great interest.

"I didn't say 'outsiders,' Larry," replied Burton, persistently. "I said that he was probably prompted by a young lady."

At this, Larry deliberately rose and walked out of the room, without a word.

"I say, Ben, can't you quit your everlasting nagging of Larry," broke in Hiram Porter, as the door closed with a bang behind that indignant young man. "What's the use of your getting into a debate, every day or two, about some mysterious young lady that you two fellows are thinking about? Let up! I wish you would."

Ben muttered something about the Captain's showing his little brief authority in matters that did not concern the club, when, by general consent, the meeting was broken up for the more important business of practice on the Galena Base Ball Grounds, placed at the disposal of the visitors by the managers of the championship series.

## CHAPTER IX.

### HOPE AND SUSPENSE.

IT was the custom in Catalpa for the storekeepers to hang out at their doors a little blue flag when they wanted the services of an errand boy. Seeing this signal at the door of Jason Elderkin's dry-goods store, Rough and Ready, wearing in the heats of summer as in winter his 'coon-skin cap, shambled in and asked what was wanted. Jason lifted his spectacles from his nose and said, jocularly: "Why, Rough and Ready, I thought you had gone up to Galena to see the match between the boys and the Galena Club."

"No sir-ee," replied the old man, "I have staid at home to keep the town in order. Me and Jedge Howell, we have to look after the boys at home, you know, or some of these frisky young colts like Jase Ayres would get away with the town whilst we were gone." And the old man chuckled as he added, "Cap. Heaton, he and his boy Al have gone together, and they do say that Mrs. Heaton is just wild because she can't keep the old man at home when base ball is going on. Well, it does beat all natur', don't it? Here's

Al kept out of the Nine because it isn't high-toned enough for Mrs. Heaton; and here's father and son gone a-galivanting up to Galena to see the show."

"I hear that Al has sent a despatch to the Judge's daughter saying that the Catalpas are going to carry off the honors this time, and no mistake," said the storekeeper. "How's that, Rough?"

"Seein' as how this bundle is going over to Boardman's, I'll jest drop in at the Jedge's house on my way back, and see if Miss Ally has got any news from the seat of war, as it were, and if she has, she'll be sure to tell me. Oh, she's clear grit, too, is that gal, and she knows that I set a heap by Larry. Larry! why, it was him what give my boy all the points he has got in the game, and you may lay your bottom dollar that that boy is goin' to be the all-firedest batter in the Stone River country; and you put that down to remember."

The garrulous old man shouldered his bundle as he spoke and plodded down Bridge Street and so across to the north side of the town. It was the day for the first game of the championship at Galena. The hot sun poured down into the Stone River Valley with great power, and the bleached surface of the old wooden bridge shimmered with undulating lines of heat as Rough and Ready toiled on his way. The roar of the dam had a cooling sound, and the group of cotton-woods and willows on the little island above were green and refreshing to the eye. But no breeze drew up the river,

and all of the north side was steeped in liquid sunshine, the trees standing motionless and the yellow road glaring in the blinding light. The toll-keeper's dog panted in the shade of the toll-house, lolling his tongue as old Rough and Ready passed by, without stopping for a word of gossip with the keeper who dozed within the doorway.

The old man paused, when half-way across the bridge, to lift his furry cap from his head and wipe the servile drops from off his burning brow. While he rested his bundle on the guard rail of the bridge, Miss Anstress Howell, the Judge's aged sister, came mincing along from the North Catalpa side, cool and fresh as if she had never before been outside of a bandbox.

"I wonder ef it will be safe to tackle her for news from Galena?" muttered the old man to himself. "She's a dangerous team to fool with. Mebbe she'll get away with me, but I'll try it."

"Good arternoon, Miss Howell. Fine hot day. Good growin' weather, as the farmers say. Hev you heerd that any of your folks got a despatch from Galena givin' any account of how the ball opens?"

Miss Howell's manner stiffened a little as she said, with a slight toss of her head, "Judge Howell, my brother, is holding court in Pawpaw, to-day, for Judge Sniffles, and nobody else but the Judge would be likely to have any despatches concerning base ball."

"Well, Miss Howell, I heerd over in town that Miss

Ally had a message of some kind, no offence to you, marm, and I want to hear from the boys powerful bad, you see, and so I make bold to ask if Miss Alice mayn't hev a despatch, or something from Larry, I mean Al."

"There is altogether too much nonsense about this base ball business in Catalpa, Mr. Rough,—excuse me, I forget your other name. It does seem to me as if the people had gone crazy, and the weather so hot too! Excuse me, I don't know anything about what is going on in Galena, no more than a child, I may say, and if any grown people want to begin over again and make children of themselves with playing ball, they have my sympathy."

So saying, and flirting off an imaginary fleck of dust from her gown with a spotless handkerchief, Miss Howell resumed her deliberate walk across the bridge. Rough and Ready replaced his cap, and looking after her said, "Sarves me right! I might hev knowed that I should get the worst on it in a talk with her. My grief! But she is a teaser. Has forgot all about the time when she was a young gal, it's so long ago. P'raps she never was young." With this, the old man shouldered his bundle and slowly made his way northward.

But Alice had received a telegram from Galena, and as Rough and Ready climbed the slope by the Judge's house, a sunny head was popped from one of its upper windows and Alice's cheerful voice cried, "Oh, Roughy,—excuse me for calling you Roughy, but I'm so glad!—Albert Heaton has telegraphed to me that the Catalpas have made ten runs in





"GOOD ARTERNOON, MISS HOWELL. FINE HOT DAY."—Page 95.



the first three innings and the Galenas only one! Isn't that perfectly splendid? Does anybody over in town know anything about it?"

"Bless your bright eyes! Miss Ally, no; the whole town's asleep. It's a hot day, you know, and there's nobody stirring. All the farmers are busy with their craps, and the streets are as lonesome as a last year's bird's nest. Ten to one, did you say? By the great horn spoon! I must go back and wake up the folks."

Suiting the action to the word, the old man tossed Mrs. Boardman's bundle of sheeting over the fence and made his way back to town as fast as his rheumatic legs would carry him. Half way across, he met Lewis Morris who was on his way over to verify the rumor that he had caught concerning the early success of the Catalpas in Galena.

"Hooray for our side!" cried Rough and Ready, exultingly. "I have heard it from the gentle Miss Ally. Our boys have made ten runs in the first three innings, and the Galena fellows have made one—one whole one."

"Then I'll turn right around and tell the news in town!" said Lewis, with excitement. "I'll have to stir the people up, for the whole town has gone to sleep, except Dr. Selby, and he was sweating at every pore, as I came by the drug store, for thinking of another defeat for the Catalpas."

Rough and Ready gazed after the rapidly retreating form of the young man who turned and stepped swiftly across the

bridge. Then, putting his hand to his 'coonskin cap, as if trying to recall something to his mind, he murmured, "If I didn't go and leave that ther bundle of sheetin' in the Judge's dooryard! 'Pears to me as if that pesky base ball had knocked my wits clean out." And, smiling at his own feeble joke, he retraced his steps to the North Catalpa side of the river.

When Lewis Morris reached the center of the town, he saw a knot of men and boys gathered around the bulletin board of *The Leaf*. "Just my luck," he muttered. "Downey has got the news out, and they have taken the edge of it off before I could get back."

But Lewis forgot his little disappointment when he eagerly scanned the bulletin which the editor had posted during his brief run across the bridge. This was what he read:

*An overwhelming victory for our nine! In the contest to-day, the Catalpas were the victors by a score of 13 to 3. Great enthusiasm prevails and the visiting nine are now being cheered by the excited populace. The result has astonished everybody, none more so than the defeated nine and their immediate friends. Our esteemed fellow townsman, Mr. Albert Heaton, Senior, has telegraphed to THE LEAF the score by innings, as follows:*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	...	total.
CATALPAS . . . . .	5	4	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	...	13.
GALENAS . . . . .	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	...	3.

*Errors, GALENAS, 13; CATALPAS, 1.*

“Here’s Lew Morris!” cried brawny Hank Jackson. “Glory enough for one day! hey, Lew? Everybody in Galena was astonished, they say, and so was everybody in Catalpa, for that matter. Why, I was just coming along the street with Andy Brubaker, and we was a-talking about the chances of our nine’s giving up the season if they got cleaned out in Galena, when I heard Mr. Downey tell Dr. Selby that the home nine had beat the Galenas on the first six innings, and says I to him, ‘If that’s so, Mr. Downey, why don’t you put it on the bulletin?’ Sure enough, he went up them stairs, five at a time, to have it done, and no sooner had he got up there than he put his head outen the winder and screeched, ‘The Catalpas have won the game by thirteen to three!’ Gosh! you should have heerd the whoop that the boys gave! And there it is, as big as life.” And Hank regarded the bulletin board with an affectionate interest.

The fact was that the community of Catalpa was unprepared for any such victory as that which had dropped in upon them, as it were, like a bolt out of a clear sky. The defeat at Bluford had unnerved all but a few faithful and undaunted spirits, and the usual dull current of town life had resumed its sluggishness until the unexpected news from the north had startled the townsfolk into new alertness. It was a great achievement, as the Galenas were famed for their prowess in the Diamond Field. They were reckoned as first in the number of batters in their nine. One of them, Devoy,

stood very near the head of the list of champion batters in the state, and another, Shallcross, was not far behind him in his general average. Yet the Catalpas had "got away with" the famous players. It was marvellous how the news flew through the town and out upon the prairie, so that by the time the moon rose, red and full, over the bluff banks above Catalpa, in innumerable cabins and farm-houses, far out on the distant wheat-farms, and over many an evening meal, the details of the triumph and its probable effect on the fortunes of "our nine" were discussed with a glow of pride, or with a lively curiosity.

"The boys," in Galena, resting from their labors, and withdrawn from the admiring attention of the citizens of the town, lounged in a big bedroom in the Quapaw House, and told, over and over again, the stirring incidents of the day—incidents on which so much depended that they now became almost like ancient history in importance. They were not too tired to play another game right then, so exhilarated were they by their unwonted success. There was no murmuring, no jealousy, and no "nagging" in the party now. Every man was elated and flushed with a sense of his own value as a factor in the game that had been played, as well as in that which was to be played on the morrow.

"Somehow, boys, I feel it in my bones that we are going to beat to-morrow," said Larry Boyne, who had won fresh laurels in the field, that day. And Larry's bright eyes sparkled anew as he spoke.

"Well, that's a new rôle for you to play, Larry," said Al Heaton who was admiringly hanging over Larry, whom he regarded as the rising player of the country. "You always were a croaker, you know, Larry, old boy, and for you to say that you feel confident of victory now, makes me almost shudder. It seems as if you were losing your head; only I know you are not."

"No, old chap, I am not losing my head. But you know I am rather superstitious; at least, my mother says so, and I have a queer notion, to-night, that we are going to do as well to-morrow as we did to-day."

"That's an encouraging sign, Larry," broke in Captain Hiram Porter. "But you fellows must all do your level best, all the same, and we mustn't let any notion of our superiority run away with us, for we are not superior, perhaps except that I do think that we are better fielders than the Galena boys."

"Whatever happens to-morrow, Al," said Larry, as they broke up their sitting for the night. "Put it down that I said that we were to win the second game in this championship series."

"And if we lose, you will charge it to some adverse fate, won't you, Larry?"

"In the bright lexicon—you know the rest, Al."

By a singular coincidence, at that very hour, Miss Alice Howell, writing to her father the glad news, added a postscript thus: "You will think me overconfident, but I am sure the Catalpas will win the championship."

## CHAPTER X.

### HOW THE GOOD NEWS CAME.

CATALPA was wide awake, next day, although the weather was hotter than ever and the little breeze that drew in from the prairie was laden with heat. The unexpected result of yesterday's game had set everybody to speculating on the issue of this day's contest. Some scandal was created by the appearance of Hank Jackson on the street with a roll of bills, offering to make bets on the game. It had never been the custom of anybody in Catalpa to wager anything on a base ball game, and there was some frowning now on the part of conservative and upright people; and those who were not specially conservative, but who disapproved of gaming, did not hesitate to reprove Hank in terms more forcible than elegant. Hank had spent some days in Bloomington, where he had frequented pool rooms and had acquired a taste for betting, and his brief experience was regarded by the younger portion of Catalpa with much awe and interest. He was followed about by the smaller boys of the town who listened while he bantered some of his cronies into making bets.



But public opinion in Catalpa was not yet educated to the point of engaging in gambling on the uncertain result of a base ball game. Added to this, it should be said, was Hank's persistence in offering bets on the defeat of the home nine. That was an unpopular side. Almost everybody wanted the Catalpas to win the game. It would decide the championship; and, although it was almost too much to hope for, there was a feeling of confidence through the town that was quite inexplicable. So, Hank, after making a swaggering tour of the shops and stores, but without receiving much popular countenance, quietly dropped out of the throngs which gathered at the street corners and in other public places. It was in vain that he argued with rude logic that it was just as safe to bet on a base ball game as on a horse race. Very few who listened to him cared to encourage this new sort of gambling.

This time, it was Al Heaton who fired the heart of Catalpa with the first intelligence from the Diamond Field. It was nearly three o'clock when his first despatch arrived, and the game had been called at two o'clock. There was much grumbling in the main street of the town, where numerous groups stood in the shade of awnings and tall buildings, waiting for the news. The windows of *The Leaf* office opened on this street, as well as on the side street on which the telegraph office was situated. Editor Downey had announced that he had made arrangements with Albert to send news directly from the base ball grounds in Ga-

lena, and that he would display a bulletin from his office windows.

Accordingly, when there was hung out a big white sheet of paper, with black lettering thereon, the assembly below was hushed in expectation. The despatch ran thus:

*Everybody confident. Larry Boyne says our nine will win the game. Weather hot, and the dust intolerable. Look out for fun.*

ALBERT HEATON.

“What does he mean by looking out for fun; and who cares what Larry Boyne thinks?” growled Hank Jackson. “I should think he might send us something more bracing than that by this time.”

But the straggling cheer that greeted Albert's encouraging message drowned Jackson's grumbling, and the crowd showed by their excitement that they were ready to accept the slightest omen as proof positive that the Catalpa nine would carry the day. So, when Judge Howell's carriage drove up and halted under the shade of the huge catalpa tree that grew in front of Dr. Selby's drug store, from which the fair Alice could see the throng and watch for the bulletin from the newspaper office, there was a little hurrah from some of the younger lads. They seemed to think that the young lady, in some fashion, represented the absent Judge, who was now recognized as one of the steadfast friends of the band of heroes.

“That's a good sign! I'll swear to gracious!” said Rough

and Ready, in a low and hoarse whisper, as he saw the Judge's handsome bays, champing their bits, and prancing uneasily under the shade of the spreading catalpa. "It's a good sign, for that gal never went back on the nine, and her coming will bring good luck. Mark my words, Jake!" Jake, the big butcher, nodded his head and only said "yaw," when the bulletin was again flung out from the window of the printing-office.

The magical black letters were read in silence broken only by the stamping of the horses tethered along the street and worried by the flies. This is what the eager spectators read:

*First inning—Catalpas, 1; Galenas, 0.*

"A big round goose egg!" screamed Lew Morris, with delight. Then he raised a hurrah, and the small boys took up the yell. Horses jumped and tore at their halters and vagrant dogs barked madly about the street. Then there were smiles and even broad laughter among the devoted supporters of the home nine. Almost everybody looked pleased, and Dr. Selby, with the easy confidence of an old friend, went to the side of the Judge's carriage and shook hands heartily with Miss Alice who was waving her parasol with a vague notion that it was necessary to celebrate the auspicious opening of the game.

"I didn't tell you, did I, doctor, that I dreamed, last night, that we had won the game? Well, I did. Aunt Anstress says that dreams go by contraries and that that

means our nine will be defeated. But I don't believe that; do you, doctor?"

"Well, I don't believe in dreams, anyhow, Miss Alice, and so I hardly think that that counts. But we will keep on thinking that the boys will beat, to-day, and even if we are disappointed, we have yet one more chance."

The doctor, accepting Alice's invitation, took a seat in the carriage from which advantageous point he looked over the gathering throng, now reinforced by arrivals from the region roundabout the town, for the news had gone forth that despatches were coming in from Al Heaton, and every man, woman and child who had the least interest in the game (and these were many) and could leave the labors and duties of the day, was there to hear.

"It looks as it did in the war, when the news from Shiloh and Vicksburg was coming in; doesn't it, doctor?"

"I don't know about that, Alice. I was in the war, myself, you know; was at Port Hudson and Vicksburg. You were a baby then, and I believe your father was in Congress. Yes, I guess it does look like war times. But see! There comes another bulletin!"

Editor Downey had rigorously excluded from his office all outsiders, and was devoting his personal attention to the all-important business of the day. With his own hands, he hung out the paper sheet bearing these words:

*2d inning*,—*Catalpas*, 0; *Galenas*, 1; *3d inning*, *Catalpas*, 0; *Galenas*, 0.

"Not so good as it might be," remarked Dr. Selby, cheerfully, "but it will grow better, by and by."

A little cloud passed over the face of Alice, and she bit her lip with vexation as Hank Jackson bawled with a rough voice, "Ten to five on the Galenas!"

"If I were a man, I'd like to take that offer," she said, her eyes sparkling.

"Oh, no, you wouldn't, Alice," cried her friend Ida. "You wouldn't encourage gambling on base ball, I'm sure."

"Perhaps not; but if I were a man, I would like to thrash that big ruffian."

Better news came, after a little while. The bulletin for the fourth inning showed four for the Catalpas and a big round "O" for their opponents. At this, there was a general and apparently concerted hurrah from the company in the street below. Editor Downey, as if thinking the cheer a personal compliment, put his frowsy head out of the window and bowed with as much grace as was possible under the circumstances.

"Mr. Downey's hair looks as if he was laboring under great excitement," said the apothecary, blandly smiling at the editor's somewhat towseled appearance. "Every individual hair is standing on end, as if he were charged with electricity."

Alice laughed joyously and seemed glad to find something under which she could cover her great elation at the good news from the North. Miss Ida uttered

sarcastic remarks about the editor's exuberant comments in the morning paper regarding the coming contest in Galena. She declared that she did not think the game nearly as important as any one of the decisive battles of the war. And she was sure that *The Leaf* would be perfectly ridiculous, next day, if the Catalpas were to win the championship. Her remarks were cut short by the display of another bulletin announcing the result of the fifth inning in these terms:—

*Hurrah for our nine! Fifth inning—Catalpas, 0; Galenas, 0.*

“What in thunder does that mean?” asked Lew Morris, angrily. “Why does the numbskull tell us to hurrah for our nine when both sides have a zero?”

A yell of derision went up from the crowd, and the editor, hearing groans and cat-calls in the street below, put out his head and, with much trepidation, cried, “It was a mistake. I forgot to put on the sixth inning. Catalpas, one; Galenas, nix!”

A loud laugh greeted this sally, and the crowd good-humoredly proposed three cheers for *The Catalpa Leaf*, which were given in a random fashion, mingled with laughter. Mr. Downey, now well-smearred with ink, and perspiring with excitement, acknowledged the salute with gravity.

“Six innings played and the Catalpas are six to the Galena's one!” exclaimed Alice, who was keeping the score

with an assiduity that seemed to come from a belief that exactness in the figures would, somehow, affect the final result. Scraps of paper, on which observers had marked the score and had set down their prognostications of the innings yet to come, were circulated through the crowd. The Catalpas now had the lead, and it would be difficult for their adversaries to come up with them.

Lew Morris, leaning on the door of the carriage, chatted with Alice, drawing on his vivid imagination for pictures of the nine as they were probably looking now, away up there in Galena. He could see, he thought, Hiram Porter devouring the ground as he made his bases with a giant's stride, his handsome face glowing with mingled heat and determination. He could even hear Larry's voice, in a stage whisper, crying, "Go it, Hiram!" And he could see Larry, at third base, when the Catalpas were in the field, making one of those superb running catches of his, Ben Burton looking on, "as if he would eat him up," added Lewis, jocularly.

"Why should Ben want to eat Larry up?" asked Dr. Selby, innocently. "Does he love him so?"

"On the contrary, quite the reverse," laughed Lewis. "Larry is showing himself to be the best player in the nine, and as Ben thought that *he* was the best, and is finding out that he is not, he loves Larry accordingly. Besides that, he is jealous of Larry for other reasons," and the young man fixed a bold look on the blushing face of Miss Alice. She

turned away to see if another bulletin were not ready, and the doctor shook his head deprecatingly at Lewis.

There was much time for talk, however, before another despatch from the seat of war appeared. The impatient crowd, panting in the heat that was more and more oppressive as the sun approached the west, flung all sorts of appeals upwards to the windows of the office of *The Leaf*. There was no response, although Mr. Downey, as if to contradict Hank Jackson's loud jeer that the editor had gone to sleep, showed his shaggy head at the window and made a negative motion with the same. There was no news.

Finally, just as some of the less patient were beginning to make their way homewards, like a banner of victory, the sheet of paper again appeared. This time, it was blazoned with these returns:—

*7th inning—Catalpas, 1; Galenas, 0; 8th inning—Catalpas, 0; Galenas, 1.*

“An even thing for the two innings!” cried Lew Morris triumphantly. “The Galenas cannot possibly pull up in the last inning! The game is ours! The game is ours!”

Lew's jubilant shout was taken up by the crowd, which now grew denser again, and the excitement mounted to fever heat as the sun sank behind the cotton-woods below the town. Satisfied that the game and the championship were virtually won, some of the elder citizens, after exchanging congratulations with everybody that had a word of joy on



their lips, walked homewards. But some of them stopped on the road and turned a listening ear towards the main street to hear the rousing cheer that soon went up, telling the town and all the Stone River Valley that the game was won and that our nine had captured the pennant of Northern Illinois.

A grimy and inky young imp, on the roof of *The Leaf* building, hoisted a particularly inky and grimy flag as the editor hung out from his window this bulletin:—

*The victory is complete! Old Catalpa to the front! Glory enough for one day! Following is the score by innings:*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	. total.
CATALPAS . . . . .	1	0	0	4	0	1	1	0	1	. . 8.
GALENAS . . . . .	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	. . 3.

*The Galenas will banquet the Catalpas at the Quapaw House, this evening, when a right royal time is expected.*

ALBERT HEATON.

“And now for the championship of the State, dad?” shouted Tom Selby, exultingly, as his father descended from the carriage of the Judge. Alice, who was beaming with delight, could hardly speak her joy. The great contest was over, and the home nine would come back covered with glory. But she shook her head at Tom’s vain-glorious remark. The league games were all made up for the season, she knew, and it would be difficult, if not impossible, to secure a challenge

from any club in the league. Oh, no, she couldn't think of it. Tom must not think of it, at least, not until another summer.

The good doctor smiled at the lad's enthusiasm and said that glory enough for one day meant glory enough for one season. There were other contests before the home nine, and they could be content, or they should be, to wear the laurels already won, whatever happened to them hereafter. They could not lose any prestige by any manner of means.

When Judge Howell arrived by the early evening train from Pawpaw, he was surprised to see the dingy flag of *The Catalpa Leaf* drooping lazily from its staff. He had not forgotten that the second game in the Northern District Championship was to have been played that afternoon; and he remembered his daughter's prediction of success. But it seemed incredible that this should have actually come to pass. As he alighted from the train, his judicial dignity a little soiled by travel and perspiration, he was met by Rough and Ready, who, with a slight touch of his 'coonskin cap, the only recognition of high station of which he was ever capable, said, "Any baggage, Jedge? carry it as cheap as anybody. Our nine has flaxed out the Galenas—eight to three! Big thing, Jedge! Lemme take that grip-sack. Great day for old Catalpa, Jedge. Your darter, she said as how she allowed that you mought like to get the news straight, so I told her I'd come up and tell you quick. Thank you, Jedge." And, dropping a silver quarter into his

pocket, Rough and Ready turned and collared a stranger from whom he wrested his valise and marched triumphantly down into the town.

When the Judge, clothed once more in the dignity of cleanliness and his home headship, heard that night from the animated lips of his daughter the story of the winning of the championship, he said, with an air of graceful condescension, "It was a famous victory, Alice. We have reason to be proud of our nine; and I will venture to say that when we get the full particulars of the game, we shall find that that fine-looking young fellow, Lawrence Boyne, contributed the largest share to the triumph."

When the details of the game were brought to Catalpa, next day, in a letter to *The Leaf*, it was found that the Judge knew just what he was talking about.

But greater news than this came with Larry Boyne and Hiram Porter, a week or two later. The nine had been playing a few games along the river towns and had rested for a day or two in Rock Island, after playing the Dacotahs of that city. Several of the nine took advantage of a lull in their engagements to visit Catalpa. Mr. Heaton and Albert had returned home, and Larry and Hiram had gone to Chicago on some mysterious errand, nobody knew just what. Neddie Ellis was one of those who had come back to Catalpa while the time was passing before they should play the new series of games beginning with the Moline club. Neddie looked very wise when asked where Larry and Hiram had gone, and

Albert Heaton assumed a most important air whenever he said anything about the doings of the two absent members of the nine.

But it all came out in due time. Captain Porter and his trusty lieutenant arrived by the noon train, and before the sun had set everybody in Catalpa knew that a match had been arranged between the Catalpa nine and the Calumet club for the State Championship. It was indeed wonderful news, and nothing since the war had happened to stir the population of that region as the intelligence. There were divers opinions regarding this unexpected development. Many thought that it was indiscreet for so young and green a club as the Catalpas to challenge the Calumets—the famous and renowned Calumets. Then there were others who thought that it was presumptuous for the Catalpa boys even so much as to ask any leading club to play them merely because a triumph had been unexpectedly achieved in Galena. But all agreed that it was a great feather in the cap of “our nine” that the Chicago club should have accepted the challenge, or should have agreed to meet them on any terms whatever.

“I am not certain whether I am glad or sorry that our nine will play the Calumets, papa,” said Alice Howell. “I mean that I cannot tell yet whether I shall be disappointed if they lose. I depend a great deal on my impressions, you know, and I haven’t any as yet.”

The Judge smiled at his daughter’s odd notion of waiting

for impressions, and replied, "I do not wait for any inspiration on the subject, my child. I am sure that the Catalpa nine will be badly beaten. I don't know much about base ball, but I do know enough to know that the Calumet club has been in the newspapers for a long time as the great base ball club of the northwest."

"That's so, papa," sighed Alice, "and I have dreadful forebodings when I think of the risk that they have undertaken."

"Nothing venture, nothing have, Alice, and it will be no disgrace if our nine are defeated by the Calumets. Unless they are very badly beaten indeed, and that is not improbable, to be sure, they will bring some new honors off the field."

The Judge's conservative and moderate view of the case was that of the average of Catalpa. To play the Calumets was in itself an honor.

Henry Jackson represented the most discouraging element in Catalpa public opinion. And when Ben Burton returned to town for a day's holiday, and became at once unusually familiar with Hank, Larry's face clouded and Alice Howell confidentially informed her friend Ida Boardman that she never could abide Ben Burton, and that now she knew he was a man who would consort with mean companions. Nothing could be lower, she thought, than the course that Henry Jackson had taken during the late contest between the Catalpas and the Galenas.

It was only by a lucky accident that the Calumets had

been able to find a place in their later engagements for a championship series of three games with the Catalpas. The sudden sickness of several members of the Osceola club, engaged to play the Calumets, had made it necessary to cancel all the engagements of the former club for the season. The Osceolas had been overtaken by a contagious disease that had made sad havoc that summer, as many will remember, among strangers who visited the lower portion of the State, which had been under water from late in February until the beginning of May. But the ill-luck of the Osceola club was the means of opening a way for the Catalpas to play the Calumets; and that was felt to be something almost providential—at least, in the town of Catalpa.

## CHAPTER XI.

### IN A NEW FIELD.

“**I** WISH so many of the Catalpa folks had not come in to see the game, to-day,” said Larry Boyne, discontentedly, on the morning of the first of the championship series of games in Chicago, late in the following October. “It is bad enough to feel like a cat in a strange garret as I do here, without the feeling added of being watched by our friends from home, who will be so awfully cut up if we do not win.”

“But you are not afraid of our losing, are you, Larry? And I am sure there is one young lady, at least, whose smiles will encourage you,” said Hiram Porter, with a grin that was meant to be sly and also cheery. “It is pretty generally understood among the boys (and as long as we are alone together, there is no need of our being shamefaced about it) that you and Miss Alice have come to an understanding, as the saying is. You needn’t say whether that is so or not, Larry, my boy. But, if I were in your place, I would be glad to have those beautiful and sympathetic eyes watching

my play. It would make me put in my very best licks, you may be sure of that."

Larry murmured something about there being a difference in people, and turned the subject to the preparations to be made for the day's event. The Catalpas had had only a little opportunity to make themselves familiar with the Chicago base ball grounds. At the end of a game played on the previous day, they had a little practice at pitching, and had taken in the situation of the arena sufficiently to enable them to be not entirely strangers to the place.

They found themselves inside of a complete enclosure, skirted by a grand stand at one end and uncovered and open seats at the other. A high board fence bounded the grassy lawn on which the Diamond Field was laid, and the seats for spectators rose above this fence, so that the players were securely left to their own devices while the game should be in progress. A breeze from the lake, tempered by the October sun, swept over the grounds, and was broken, when the wind arose, by the screen formed by the board enclosure.

When the nine, with beating hearts and quickened pulses, entered the grounds on the day so fraught with importance to them, they were a little dumbfounded to see that an immense crowd of people, perhaps ten thousand, all told, occupied the vast array of seats that lined the amphitheater. A brass band blared and brayed in a tall stand set apart for them, and the entrance of the Catalpa nine was the signal for a burst of kindly applause that helped to reassure the



lads composing that now well-known club. Since the matches played in the river towns, the nine had met some of the best-known clubs in the State, and in Iowa. With varying success, but generally doing credit to their own native place, the Catalpas had attracted attention by their uniformly excellent play, their manly bearing, and by their steady habits. They had made no enemies. So, when the young fellows, clad in their blue and white uniform, came into the range of vision of the throngs in the grand stand and boxes, a round of applause greeted them, and one enthusiastic citizen from Catalpa, no less a person than the deputy sheriff of Dean County, ventured to propose three cheers for the Catalpa nine. The proposition fell very flat, and, covered with confusion, the deputy sheriff sat down and mopped his manly brow.

As Hiram Porter threw up the penny for the toss, Larry's eye involuntarily sought a curtained box to which his attention had been directed, the day before, as he had inspected the grounds in company with Miss Ida Boardman, Miss Alice Howell and two other ladies from Catalpa. The party was under the guidance of Mr. Heaton. Albert was never long in one place. He was too highly excited to be depended upon as an escort for the young ladies, and he divided his time between his old companions of the Catalpa nine and the pitcher of the Calumets, Samuel Morse, an old school chum, who had helped signally in arranging the present contest.

So, as Larry's glance lighted on the first box to the right

of the grand stand, it caught an answering smile from Miss Alice, and Albert Heaton, who was momentarily fluttering about the box, waved his hand to the favorite third base man of the Catalpas and said, under his breath, "Sail in, old boy!"

"You don't imagine that Mr. Boyne heard that, do you, in all this noise?" asked Alice, with rosy face and sparkling eyes.

"No, I don't suppose that Larry heard or saw anything but what he saw and guessed at in that telegraphic look of yours, Miss Ally," replied Albert, mockingly. "Larry, the dear boy, knows well enough what I would be saying to him; and I hope he knows what you would be telegraphing him by way of encouragement. Hurrah! Hiram has won the toss! He'll send the Calumets to the bat, see if he don't."

Albert was right. The home club were sent to the bat, and Thomas Walsh, of the Black Hawks, took his place as umpire. This was the order in which the two clubs were named and stationed on that eventful day:—

*Catalpas.*

LARRY BOYNE, 3d B.  
 SAMUEL MORRISON, L. F.  
 NEDDIE ELLIS, C. F.  
 CHARLIE KING, P.  
 HART STIRLING, 2d B.  
 JOHN BRUBAKER, R. F.  
 HIRAM PORTER, 1st B. (Capt.)  
 BEN BURTON, S. S.  
 WM. VAN ORMAN, C.

*Calumets.*

DARIUS AYRES, 1st B. (Capt.)  
 SAMUEL MORSE, P.  
 JOHN HANDY, 3d B.  
 ROB PEABODY, R. F.  
 THOMAS SHOFF, C. F.  
 GLENN OTTO, S. S.  
 JAMES KENNEDY, 2d B.  
 CHARLIE WEBB, C.  
 JAMES MCWILLIAMS, L. F.

The Catalpa boys thought there should have been breathless silence in the enclosure as Hiram Porter, having carefully placed his men, called to the umpire "play!" Play was accordingly called, but there was silence, by no means, in the grounds. The clatter of late comers reaching their seats, the buzz of conversation that yet arose from the crowds in the amphitheater, and the cry of boys selling score-cards disturbed the serenity of the ardent champions of the Catalpa Nine. They wondered why people should talk when so momentous a game was about opening. And Alice, with a feverish sigh of impatience, said to Miss Ida that she should think that the Chicago people had very little manners. Whereupon Miss Anstress, with great severity, said that the spectators were not so much in love with the players that they cared a pin whether either side won. This unkind remark was turned aside by Mr. Heaton who said that there were not a few among the on-lookers who had bet money in the gambling rooms outside and who did care very much which side won the game.

All this talk was brought to an end when Darius Ayres, the captain of the Calumets, stood up at the bat and made ready for the first play. Darius was a tall and shapely young fellow, renowned for his long-field hits, and a swift runner. He had an evil look in his eyes, as some of the Catalpa visitors thought, and when he struck a straight ball, like a cannon shot, to right field, there was a little shudder in one of the private boxes. But John Brubaker,

always alert, captured it on a hard run. This put the Catalpas in good spirits at once. The game had opened well for them. "Two good signs, Alice," said Ida Boardman. "Won the toss and caught out the first man!"

John's clever catch did not pass unnoticed, for the numerous supporters of the Catalpas raised a little cheer which was taken up and continued around the enclosure as Sam Morse went to the bat for the home club. But Samuel fared no better than his captain, and retired on a short and easy fly to Ben Burton. The first half of the inning was ended by John Handy, who hit a hot grounder to Larry Boyne at third base. Larry mastered it in fine style and made a lightning throw to Hiram Porter on first base. The eyes of the visitors and their friends fairly sparkled as the Catalpas came in from the field. They had made a good beginning.

But no sooner had the nine reached the players' bench than Ben Burton began to criticise the manner in which honest John Brubaker had been rewarded for capturing what Ben was pleased to call "a two-old-cat fly." Larry, politely requesting Burton to be civil, picked up his bat and faced the pitching of the renowned Sam Morse. He made two ineffectual plunges at the ball, and, while the catcher of the Calumets was adjusting his mask so as to enable him to come up closer to the player, Larry stole a glance at his comrades and was mortified and annoyed to see a derisive smile on the blonde face of Ben Burton, while

the other seven occupants of the bench wore an uneasy expression. Ben Burton was evidently making them uncomfortable. Larry moistened his hands, and, carefully gauging one of Morse's favorite inshoots, hit the ball with all his might. The flying sphere went swiftly into the left field and yielded the stalwart third base man of the Catalpas two bases. Alice involuntarily clapped her hands, happily unmindful of the sour looks of her observant aunt.

Sam Morrison next stood up before the redoubtable Morse, and hit an easy grounder to Glenn Otto, at short stop, and Samuel was retired at first base. His shot, however, advanced Larry to third base, and Neddie Ellis took up the bat. But Neddie could not yet understand the puzzling curves of the Calumet's pitcher, and, having wildly struck the air three times, went out. This made two out for the Catalpas, with Larry Boyne anxiously waiting on the third base. Not long did he wait, however, for Charlie King, long of limb and keen of eye, came to the bat with great expectations on the part of the sons of Catalpa. Charlie thought favorably of the first ball pitched at him by Morse and he sent it flying to the center field for one base, and allowed Larry to come home amidst a little round of applause from the Catalpa section of the spectators. During the cheer that greeted the successful play, Charlie attempted to steal to second base but was thrown out by Billy Webb, and the ardor of the spirits of Catalpa was consequently soon dampened.

The Calumets now went to work with a will at the begin-

ning of their second inning, and, after receiving some hints from Jamie Kennedy, who assumed to know a little about the mysteries of King's curves, Robert Peabody, the Calumet's right fielder, a Michigan University man and a famous athlete, handled the bat and called for a low ball from the pitcher of the Catalpas. This was delivered, but not where Rob had asked for it, and he politely refused to strike at it, muttering to Captain Darius, "I won't strike until I get one just knee-high." Charlie King overheard this little byplay and continued to put the ball in the vicinity of Peabody's shoulder until the umpire called "six balls." It was now about time for King to give the Chicago player a good ball, but Peabody could not be tempted to strike at it, after being ordered by his captain to try and take his base on called balls. The result was that tricky Charlie King delivered three balls in rapid succession just where the dissatisfied right fielder of the Calumets had requested them, and the umpire called, "One strike!" "Two strikes!" "Three strikes!" "Striker out!"

The ashen stick was then taken up by Tom Shoff, who sent the ball in the direction of Ben Burton at short stop, and who fumbled it, dropping it several times as if it were a hot potato, allowing Tom to reach first base in safety. Next, Glenn Otto hit a ball to Hiram Porter who fielded it handsomely, putting out the striker but allowing Shoff to go to second base. While Jamie Kennedy was at the bat, a passed ball allowed Shoff to complete three quarters of his homeward journey. With two out and a man on third base, Captain

Porter naturally felt alarmed. He cautioned his men to be cool and careful, "especially cool," he added. After two strikes were called on Kennedy, he solved one of Charlie King's in-shoots and, to the delight of the Chicago onlookers, sent the ball rolling in center field while Shoff sped swiftly homewards; and the score stood 1 and 1. The Calumet's half of the inning was ended by the retiring of Webb on a foul fly to "The Lily," as Bill Van Orman was now universally called. The Catalpa boys were not disheartened; they had confidence in each other, and they went to work again with a determination to try and recover what they had lost. In the second inning, however, they found themselves unsuccessful. Hart Stirling was fielded out at first base by Jamie Kennedy; John Brubaker, following him, met with the same fate, being thrown out at first by Glenn Otto; and Hiram Porter ended the inning by hitting a sky-scraper to James McWilliams at left field.

There was intense depression in the Catalpa section and among the nine of that famous town; only the face of Larry Boyne still bore any semblance of contentment. Larry smiled with his attempt to infuse a little more hopefulness into the Catalpa bosom. And looking to the box where Mr. Heaton's tall white hat towered conspicuously, he caught an answering smile from the young lady who carried a blue parasol.

The score now stood even at even innings, and the faces of the Chicago players wore a broad smile of complacency in place of the gloomy look that had previously been their

characteristic expression. Full of confidence, James McWilliams picked out his favorite bat and faced "Tricky Charlie," as they had already dubbed the pitcher of the visitors. King was determined to retire this particular player, as "Mac" had often expressed a desire to "take the conceit out of that chap from Catalpa." Charlie did some of his fine work for the occasion and his friend McWilliams threw down his bat in disgust, after hearing the third strike called by the umpire; and Captain Darius Ayres, with a look of vengeful determination, took the place vacated by his club mate. He hit a sharp grounder between first and second bases and reached the first bag. At this point of the game, the boys from Catalpa had lost some of the hope that they had cherished at the beginning of the contest; and they were not cheered in the least by a sarcastic smile that adorned the face of their short stop, Ben Burton, who appeared to be almost glad that the chances of his own club were diminishing, instead of increasing.

Even from her distant point of vantage, Alice Howell, scanning Ben's sour face through her field glass, saw with uneasiness that forbidding look and said, in a tragic whisper to her companion, "Ida, if that scamp could throw the game, I believe he is mean enough to do it."

Sam Morse made a base hit to the right field, and Ayres went safely home to third base, while Morse stole to second base. With second and third bases occupied and but one man out, the Catalpas did not feel in jovial mood, and



the deputy sheriff of Dean County looked around upon the bright faces of the local spectators with the air of one who is indignant at an outrage which he is powerless to abate.

The next man to the bat was John Handy, who had the reputation of being "a slugger," and as he called out in a stern voice, "Give me a low ball, and I'll knock it's cover off," some of the excitable players quaked in their shoes; but Hiram Porter quieted his men by saying, in a low tone of voice, "Keep cool, fellows! keep cool and we will double them up yet!" Handy hit the ball, the first that was delivered him, and it went like a rocket to Larry Boyne at third base. That young gentleman was ready to receive it, and by making a difficult one-hand catch, he succeeded in making a double play as Ayres had vacated third base without once dreaming that Larry would be able to capture the ball.

Ben Burton came now to the bat for the Catalpas, in this inning; but Ben had not established a very good reputation as a batsman, and his speedy retiring on a foul ball excited no remark. "The Lily" took his place at the bat and at once gave evidence of his prowess by hitting the ball for two bases which he made with neatness and despatch. Larry Boyne followed him and gently tipped the sphere for a single base-hit, without ado, whereat "The Lily" slipped to third base. The spectators eyed Sam Morrison as he swung his bat over his shoulder and strode to the home plate. Sam was a stocky, well-built young fellow, with a well-shaped

head and shoulders, and a fine pair of very long arms. He was anxious to do something to send up the score of the Catalpas, but he sent up nothing but a small fly to Morse, and he was at once succeeded by Neddie Ellis, the rather diminutive center fielder of the Catalpa Nine. Neddie owed the club three base hits, as he thought, and was falling behind in his batting record as the season had advanced. He moistened his hands and, with the avowed intention of losing the ball, he made a plunge, and, as Al Heaton from his perch remarked, "hit the ball on the nose" and sent it flying over the center fielder's head. After Larry and "The Lily" had cleared the home plate, Neddie tried his best to make a home run. Tommy Shoff, however, handled the ball in clever fashion, and by fielding it quickly, caught Neddie at the home plate, ending the inning and making the score three to one in favor of the Catalpas.

A murmur of applause, mingled with the little buzz which always follows the close of an inning, like a sigh of relief, went around as the Catalpas went to the field with light hearts. Two or three of the baser sort of the gambling on-lookers jeered the visitors with derisive remarks, but this indiscretion was speedily suppressed. "Fair play for the visitors" was the watchword of the day. The Catalpa boys disposed of their opponents at the opening of the fourth inning without allowing them to send a man around the circuit. In fact, not a player of the Calumet club reached first base in safety during this inning. Rob Peabody secured first base on called

balls, and was followed at the bat by Shoff who hit a grounder to Hart Stirling, at second base, and who delivered the ball in fine style to his captain on first base, after making a neat pick-up. Glenn Otto managed, by great craftiness, to send the ball outside of the diamond with tremendous force, but he lifted it too high and he fell a victim to Sam Morrison's alertness in the left field.

Jamie Kennedy, who succeeded at the bat, also gave the ball a tremendous whack, but he, too, lifted it too high, and Neddie Ellis, in center field, captured it without serious difficulty. The Catalpa club, in this inning, was obliged to be contented with a zero, and Ben Burton's face was a puzzling study to Alice Howell and her friend Ida, who scanned the unconscious Benjamin through their glass, as if his tell-tale countenance were an indicator of the progress of the game. This time, they could not make out whether the Catalpa short stop was pleased by the ill fortune of his own club, or dismayed by the advancing prospects of the Chicago boys. They gave up the riddle with disgust.

There was yet no real occasion for dismay, although there was when Charlie King began the work of going out by hitting a slow ball to Darius Ayres at first base, and Hart Stirling followed his example by a foul tip to Charlie Webb. John Brubaker, "Honest John," as he was called, hit the ball with all his might and had covered half the circuit before he realized that the sphere had gone outside of the foul flags. He made a second attempt, however, and was retired without

hitting the ball, Sam Morse's out-curves being more intricate than anything that he had yet encountered. Honest John's inglorious withdrawal closed the inning.

The Calumets sent Webb first to the bat at the opening of the next inning, but Charlie was not fortunate. He hit the ball several times, and it went high in air, and escaped the vigilance of the Catalpas. But Webb sent up one foul too many and the watchful and agile Larry Boyne captured it, after a hard run. James McWilliams for the second time faced Charlie King's pitching, and as he left his seat, said, "Boy's, I'll eat clover for a week if I don't hit him safely this time." Mac had fire in his eye, and his look and his remark did not escape the attention of Charlie King, who, turning to his captain, slyly promised to give the Chicago man an opportunity to make good his promise. King kept his word, and, by cunning pitching, retired McWilliams on strikes after six balls were charged against him.

Captain Darius Ayres hit safely to the left field, but it was too late, as Sam Morse ruined all chances of the scoring of the Calumets by sending a fly which was neatly caught by Hart Stirling at second base. The Catalpas also failed to add any runs to their score in the fifth inning. At this point, Sam Morse was pitching in admirable style and it was with difficulty that the visitors could hit the ball at all. Morse had a very effectual out-curve, and he had made good use of it during the last two innings.

Captain Hiram Porter went to the bat with some of the

confidence that he had tried to inspire in the breasts of his comrades, but he failed to accomplish his dearest desire, and went out on the strikes successively called by the umpire. He was followed by Ben Burton, who walked up to the batsman's position with a lazy and indifferent manner, hit the ball in an off-hand fashion, and had the pleasure of seeing it fielded by Glenn Otto, and was retired at first base. Here "The Lily" made a desperate attempt to achieve a home run, and he probably would have been successful if he had hit the ball far enough into the out-field, judging from the manner in which he "sprinted" to first base on a slow ball which was readily fielded by Jamie Kennedy.

"This is our lucky inning," said Captain Ayres to John Handy, as the latter started to face the pitching of Charlie King in the sixth inning. "Here, take my bat for luck," he added, "and see if you can't use it to advantage." Handy accepted the offer of the captain's club and used it with good effect. He called for a high ball, caught King off his guard as he struck, and so secured a good hit on the very first ball, and made first base. Rob Peabody followed and hit a liner to Neddie Ellis who misjudged the distance, and the ball went over his head and allowed Rob to make two bases, while Handy got safely home. This put the figures three to two in favor of the Catalpas and seemed to inspire the Calumets with new confidence, their captain remarking with glee, "I told you this was our lucky inning."

Right here, however, Tommy Shoff went out on a fly to

Larry Boyne, and "The Lily" caught a sharp foul tip from the bat of Glenn Otto, which left Peabody on second base and two men out. The prospects of the home nine were not brightening.

Next to the bat came Jamie Kennedy, who tried his best to make a short right field hit that should send his colleague safely home, as Peabody was a good base runner and needed only "half a chance" to make a home run. Jamie hit the ball in the right direction, but his blow was a trifle too hard and the ball was cleverly caught by John Brubaker at right field, and this left the game still three to two in favor of the Catalpas. The latter did not, however, feel safe with so small a lead, and they thought it prudent to send several more men around the circuit of the bases, if possible. Larry Boyne was the first man to the bat for the Catalpas in the sixth inning, and he secured his base on called balls, but fell before Charlie Webb's throwing, while trying to steal to the second bag. Sam Morrison struck out, and Neddie Ellis ended the inning by sending up a sky-scraper which was nicely nipped, just in the nick of time, apparently, by Rob Peabody.

In the seventh inning, both clubs failed to score. Webb hit a ball in the direction of Ben Burton who made an overthrow to first base. McWilliams followed and hit a short one to Hart Stirling at second base, who, with the aid of Hiram Porter, made a very pretty double play. Darius Ayres secured his base on called balls, stole to second base,

but was left there, as Sam Morse retired on strikes. Not one of the Catalpa players reached first base. Charlie King and Hart Stirling both went out on flies, the former to Tom Shoff and the latter to Glenn Otto. John Brubaker failed to hit the ball and was consequently called out on strikes.

“The Calumets have everything to gain and nothing to lose,” remarked Mr. Heaton, sagely, as he regarded the field from the box from which the little party of interested Catalpans overlooked the beautiful scene below. The yellow sun, now declining westward, tinted the woodwork of the stands and enclosures with a golden hue, and a breeze from the lake flaunted the many-colored flags that adorned the structure. The yellow light only intensified the brilliant greenness of the lawn, on which the Diamond Field was laid, and the brilliant costumes of the players were tricked out with a new and strange luster as the sunshine rained down through veiling mists. But the absorbed spectators, as well as the intensely engrossed players in the field below, had no eyes for the picture. Every eye was fixed on John Handy, as he went to the bat for the Calumets. It was felt that they would take desperate chances. On the next few plays might turn the issue of the game. Silence as complete as if there was not a soul in the vast enclosure reigned as Handy took his place at the bat.

He placed the ball safely in the center field and was followed by Peabody who also gained a single hit, sending the ball into the left field. The next ball was hit to Ben Burton

by Shoff. Ben was unable to handle the ball properly, and Hart Stirling came to his rescue and as Ben dropped it out of his hands, Stirling picked it up and sent it to first base in time to head off Shoff. At this point in the game, only one man was out and the second and third bases were occupied. A trifling error would tie the game. A single base hit would give the Calumets the lead. The attention with which the play was now regarded from the seats was something almost painful in its tenseness.

Glenn Otto stood before Charlie King's pitching with a look of resolution and defiance. He had been ordered not to strike at a ball until it was put where he asked for it, and to take the chances of the catcher of the Catalpas having a passed ball charged to him. In this little scheme there was one error. King very well knew the purpose of his opponent, and he managed his own points so well that, before Otto could realize what was about to happen, King had him out on strikes.

Jamie Kennedy was the next man to fall before the destructive tactics now followed by the Catalpas. Jamie hit a sharp ball to Larry Boyne, who, with characteristic skill, retired him at first base. This clever bit of play took a load from the hearts of the Catalpas, and, in the excitement of the moment, Deputy Sheriff Wheeler ejaculated "Gosh all hemlock!" whereupon everybody in that region laughed, as if glad of a pretext to slacken their attention from the play for an instant.



But the riveted intentness of the spectators was at once resumed as the boys of Catalpa went to the bat in the eighth inning, and succeeded in placing another run to their credit. Hiram Porter hit to Kennedy at second base, and was retired at first base. Ben Burton followed his example and "The Lily" finally secured the home run which he had been looking for ever since he had left Catalpa. "The Lily" had many strong points, but base-running was not one of them. He had two strikes called on the first two balls pitched, and then made ready for the third, and, as the ball curved in, he stepped backwards a few inches and hit it with all his might, which was a great deal, for "The Lily" was a man of brawn and muscle. The ball flew over the center fielder's head like a rifle-shot and Bill covered the entire circuit with ease, winning an irrepressible and resounding burst of applause from the multitudes that crowded the amphitheater.

"Splendid, Bill! perfectly splendid!" cried Alice Howell, wholly oblivious of the fact that there were other people than herself in the circle about her. Mr. Heaton looked around with admiration at the impulsive girl, while the dignified maiden aunt glanced into the next box to see if anybody had caught the words of her erratic ward and niece. While this little byplay went on, Alice's eyes were fixed on Larry Boyne who ended the eighth inning by sending a fly ball to McWilliams and so going out.

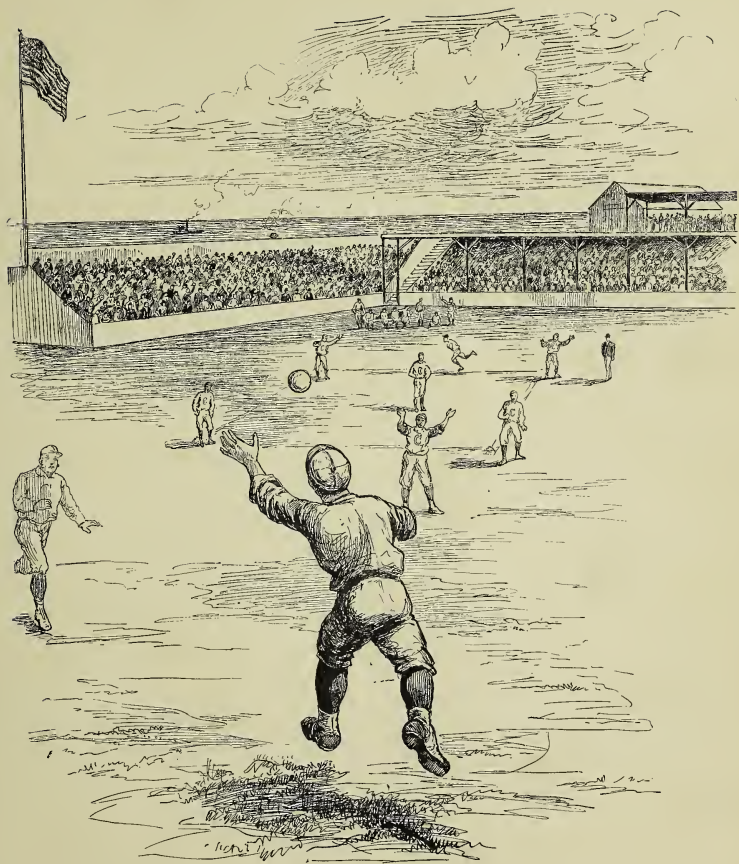
The score now stood four to two in favor of the Catalpas.

To his infinite chagrin, Captain Ayres saw defeat staring him in the face. Hastily calling his men about him, he held a hurried consultation, as they came in from the field. He said,

“Boys, we must take all the chances this time. They lead us two runs, and, in order at least to tie them, you must trust to errors, and, above all things, do not hug the bases.”

Captain Darius was right in this particular, and the men obeyed his instructions to the letter in regard to hugging the bases; but it was impossible for them to show any sign of insubordination, as not a man went beyond the first base. Every member of the Calumet club was retired as fast as he went to the bat. Charlie Webb gayly faced “tricky Charlie,” and hit the first ball pitched. It went sailing out of the Diamond and into the hands of Sam Morrison. The second victim was McWilliams who failed to take down the pride of King, as he had promised himself that he would; and Charlie felt prouder than ever as he sent his formidable antagonist to the players’ bench, put out on strikes.

Darius Ayres made several ineffectual attempts to hit the sphere, and at last struck the ball fairly, but Larry Boyne was prepared for its coming his way. Running backwards, with his eye fixed on the little black speck that dropped out of the clouds with lightning-like swiftness, Larry moved over the turf without seeming to move. Ida Boardman so far forgot herself as to cry out, at this critical juncture, “Catch



"IDA BOARDMAN SO FAR FORGOT HERSELF AS TO CRY OUT AT THIS CRITICAL JUNCTURE:  
'CATCH IT! CATCH IT!'"—Page 136.



it! catch it!" The sphere fell into Larry's hardened hand with a resounding thud, and with a fervent "Heaven bless you!" the young lady sunk back into her seat, while a prodigious cheer, frightening to flight the sparrows that twittered on the edges of the structure, and faintly heard far out by sailors on the lake, proclaimed the contest ended with a famous victory for the Catalpa Nine.

The band broke forth into a pæan of triumph, and while the majority of the spectators began to shuffle out with eager haste, a few, other than the delighted visitors from Catalpa, remained to gaze with undisguised admiration on the stalwart and handsome young fellows who had so unexpectedly won the day.

The two captains, as the game was concluded, advanced towards each other with outstretched hands.

"Your men are capital players," said Hiram Porter, a glow suffusing his cheek, "and I consider it a great honor to have defeated them."

"Aye, aye," said Captain Ayres, not without a wince. "It is a little hard for our boys to be defeated after playing a game without errors; but your victory was due to lucky batting, and it does not signify that your men are the better players. We will try and turn the tables to-morrow."

The visitors gave three cheers and a tiger for their opponents, and then retired from the field. It would be useless to attempt to describe the thrill and the suppressed exultation with which they read on the bulletin boards of

the city newspaper offices, as they went to their lodgings, the following score:—

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
CALUMETS . . . . .	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	=2.
CATALPAS . . . . .	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	=4.

*Runs earned*—CALUMETS, 0; CATALPAS, 4.

*Base hits*— “ 5, “ 6.

*Errors*— “ 0, “ 3.

*Umpire*, MR. THOMAS WALSH.

*Time of game*, two and a half hours.

## CHAPTER XII.

### AFTER THE VICTORY.

“**T**HE boss says he would be obliged to you if you would make less noise.”

It was a tall and red-faced young man who brought this message to the Catalpa Nine, as they were gathered in the room of Captain Hiram Porter, in their lodging-house, after the great match game. Al Heaton had hurried to join the boys, as soon as he had sent to Catalpa his despatch announcing the result of the contest in the most glowing terms consistent with the rate of telegraph tolls and the needed conciseness of a despatch. All hands were in that flow of animal spirits that might have been expected from nearly a dozen young fellows who are elated over a great victory and who have laboriously repressed their jubilation until they are alone.

“There! I told you, boys, that your skylarking would bring up the landlord. Oh, I say, Neddie, quit your fooling. You can’t throw ‘The Lily,’ if you try all night; and we are making such a racket that the whole house is disturbed.” This was Captain Porter’s admonition.

"Besides," said Larry Boyne, who was panting with the unwonted exertion of boosting Charlie King over the headboard of the bedstead, where Charlie was determined he would not go, "besides all that, it's time for you and me, Hi, to get ready to go out to dinner."

"Where are you two fellows going to dinner?" demanded half a dozen voices at once. "Are you going to throw off on us in that way?"

Captain Hiram explained that he and Larry had accepted an invitation to take dinner with Judge Morris, with whose family Mr. Heaton and Albert were staying during the progress of the games in Chicago. The Morrises, he added, lived on the north side of the river, and he and Larry should be ready to start, instead of "cutting up" to show how tickled they were with their recent victory.

"But 'twas a famous victory," quoted Larry, "for all that, and I would just as soon stay with the boys and celebrate it as go out to dine with Judge Morris, who, they say, is a heavy swell."

"I happen to know that Miss Alice Howell and her friend Miss Ida are stopping with the Morrises, Larry," said Ben Burton, with an unpleasant leer, "and you and Hiram will be in clover; so you can afford to shake us until the next game."

Larry grew very red in the face at this, and there was a dangerous gleam in Hiram Porter's eye as he noted the ill-natured scowl on Burton's countenance. He restrained



himself, however, and said, "Why do you continually harp on the Judge's daughter, Ben? The young lady is from our own town, and she is more interested in the success of the Catalpas than some of its members, I reckon; at least, I think so, judging from appearances."

"What do you mean by that, Hi Porter?" demanded Ben, hotly. "You have insinuated that sort of thing too many times in my hearing. And I want you to understand that you can't put on any captain's airs over me, now that we are off the field. I am my own master for to-night anyway."

"Come, come, boys," interposed Larry, soothingly. "Don't let us mar the enjoyment of this evening by lugging in any old quarrels or little differences. We shall all have to pull together to-morrow, if we are to beat the Calumets. They are going to give us a stiff brush, and you may depend on that. Come, Hiram, let's be off."

Burton said something, sullenly and indistinctly, about the certainty of the defeat of the Catalpas, to-morrow, which caught the ear of "The Lily," who, still puffing with the effects of his tussle with Neddie Ellis, was regarding the malcontent Ben with an expression of wonder on his good-natured face. He slowly dropped out a few words of comment, in his usual fashion, upon Burton's unfriendly attitude and then added:

"I say, I wonder why you don't give up playing base ball, since you find so little fun in it. 'Pears to me you are

all the time out 'o sorts—like. You don't enjoy good health, Ben, and that's what is the matter along of you. Now, why do you think that the Calumets are going to get away with us, to-morrow?"

But before Ben could form a reply and cover the confusion that crept over his face, Neddie Ellis, who was the universal favorite of the club, broke in with, "Oh, I say, boys, do you know what these Chicago people call us? why they call us 'The Cats.' That's short for Catalpas, I suppose. We ought to call the Calumets 'The Cads,' and I guess that would be getting even."

Under cover of the laugh which this sally raised, Hiram, Larry, and young Heaton departed to fulfil their engagement on the north side, Ben Burton looking after them with a darkened countenance.

"Ben is angry because he is not invited to Judge Morris's," said Larry, as the three young fellows stepped lightly off in search of a street car. "He has a jealous temper, and the least thing that looks like a slight sets him off."

"Well," said Albert, "Alice said that the Judge would have liked to have invited the whole nine, if he had had room to entertain them properly; but he hadn't, and so he invited only those with whom the governor was most acquainted."

"To say nothing of Miss Alice?" added Hiram, slyly.

Albert admitted that Miss Alice's wishes were consulted

in the matter, and that it was only natural that she, being a visitor, should indicate her preferences in the matter.

“What does it signify, anyhow?” said Larry, a little impatiently. “It seems to me that Ben Burton is ready to fly out at the least provocation. I almost wish we had never thought of going over to Judge Morris’s. I am sure I have tried my level best to keep the peace with Ben, but he seems to grow more and more cantankerous every day. To think of raising a breeze over such a trifle as this of our going out to dinner without him! It makes me ashamed of my companionship with him.”

The conversation was stopped by their entering a street car where they were entertained by the audible comments of the passengers on the wonderful game that had been played that afternoon. Base ball in Chicago is one of the favorite pastimes of the people. But there was so much of the element of unexpectedness in the result of that day’s game that it set the tongues of everybody to wagging. Unknown and in silence, the champions of the Catalpa Nine heard themselves and their playing discussed with great freedom and animation. The general verdict was that “The Cats” would, next day, receive their reward in the shape of a “basket of goose eggs” with which they would depart for home, sadder and wiser for their visit.

“What do you think of that for an opinion, Larry?” asked Hiram, laughingly, as they alighted from the car, one block from their destination. “What do you think of

the woman in the corner who said that the Calumets were only encouraging us on to our defeat?"

Larry replied that that was precisely what Ben Burton thought, and Hiram ejaculated, "Oh, he does, does he? Then it seems that our short stop and our adversaries, or the friends of our adversaries, agree as to what is going to happen to-morrow."

"Perhaps they are right," said Albert, cheerily. "But here we are," and stopping before a handsome house, he darted up the steps and rang the door bell.

While the lads waited for admission, Larry turned and looked westward, with wistful eyes, and said,

"I wonder how they are taking the news in Catalpa, about now?"

Albert's reply that they were probably having a jollification really described what was at that moment taking place. Tom Selby was the happy recipient of early telegrams from Larry, and the editor of *The Leaf* sustained his reputation by putting out bulletins from Al Heaton and his father, at frequent intervals during the progress of the game. The excitement waxed high as the contest proceeded, and when the final result was reached, the town was fairly mad with joy. The event had eclipsed everything of the kind that had happened during the season. Every man who had a flag hung it out to the breeze. Jedediah Van Orman, "The Lily's" father, took up a collection from the willing shopkeepers and bought a supply of powder, with which he

proceeded to fire a salute from four anvils, the only artillery then accessible in the town. Victory brooded over Catalpa, and in every house as the red sun went down, that night, there was but one theme of conversation—base ball.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### PRIDE HAS A FALL.

**F**OG and dampness covered the city of Chicago, next day, when the Catalpa nine, shivering in the chilly air, loitered the time away before the hour came for their little preliminary practice in the base ball grounds. Somebody said, while Captain Hiram was marshalling his men, that the day was a bad one for Catalpa. At this Larry laughed heartily. "As if," he said, "the gloom of a foggy day was not just as ominous for the Chicago boys as for the Catalpas."

"Oh they are used to it," said Ben Burton, gruffly. Soon after, when the hour for play had arrived, Ben was nowhere to be found. Vainly they looked for him in various nooks and corners of the structure, and they were beginning to ask if he had not been spirited away when he hurried in, looking very flushed and red. When asked somewhat tartly by his captain where he had been, Ben made no answer but took up his bat and marched in with the rest.

"He has been visiting some of those confounded pool

rooms, I'll be bound," whispered Sam Morrison, who cordially disliked and actively suspected the Catalpa short stop. But there was no time for discussion. The nine now emerged into the arena.

The sky was brightening as the two nines met, and the crowds in the vast amphitheater, largely reinforced since yesterday, in consequence of the fame of the visiting nine being spread abroad, gave "The Cats" a cheery round of applause as they made their appearance at the entrance to the field. "Keep a stiff upper lip, Larry, old boy," was Albert's heartening injunction as the two friends parted at the doorways. Larry smiled brightly and his eye involuntarily sought the upper box from which he had seemed to draw so much inspiration, the day before. It was empty, and he felt a little pang of disappointment. The momentary feeling of depression was soon dissipated, however, for the serious work of the day was now to begin, and sentimentalities were out of place.

The Catalpas failed to win the toss, whereat Neddie Ellis gave a comical little groan of pain and whispered, facetiously, to Ben Burton, "Another evil sign, Bennie!"

"Yes," replied Ben, gloomily, "the worst yet."

He paid no attention to Neddie's mocking laugh, but took his place on the player's bench, as Larry Boyne took up his bat and advanced to the position in obedience to orders. For the scorer had shouted, "Larry Boyne to the bat, and Sam Morrison on deck!"

As Larry, with an elastic movement of his manly figure, placed himself squarely before Sam Morse, the Calumet's pitcher, he said, "Give me one of your favorite high balls, and I'll try to put it over that netting." Morse, in his turn, squared himself and at once began to deliver a series of hot balls, but all of them too low for the Catalpa player to strike at. But he gave one ball at the desired height, however, and, to use the expression of "The Lily," Larry "hit it squarely on the nose," and placed a base hit to his credit. Sam Morrison profited by his example and put the ball safely in the left field. Neddie Ellis then came up, with a beaming smile on his face, and justified the expectations of the Catalpa delegation in the seats, now largely increased by new arrivals. He hit the ball a resounding thwack which was good for three bases, and sent in two runs, Larry and Morrison reaching the home plate with ease.

Charlie King was the first man to be put out; he hit the ball, which was a sharp one, to John Handy at third base, and that active young man mastered it in fine style and retired Charlie at first base. The hit, however, proved to be of value as it sent Neddie Ellis safely across the goal and was the means of tallying the third run for the visiting nine. Hart Stirling went out on a foul ball to Charlie Webb, and John Brubaker sent up a sky-scraper which was captured by McWilliams in the left field. This ended the first half of the first inning, and, with light hearts and radiant faces, the Catalpas went to the field.



As Larry took his position at third base, he glanced furtively toward the draped box on the right of the grand stand. At that moment, a blue parasol was unfurled, for the sun now broke forth from the clouds and mist. One glance was all that he could spare, but it was enough. "She has come," he said to his secret heart.

The Calumets, on the other hand, were coming in from the field with looks of consternation which did not escape the attention of the coldly critical young ladies in the upper box. Scanning them through her glass, Alice declared that they looked as if they were going to a funeral, and Deputy Sheriff Wheeler, far around on the other side of the enclosure, in the more democratic open seats, said very much the same thing.

"Never mind, boys," said Captain Ayres, trying to instil a bit of courage into his men. "Perhaps that is a lively ball and we may bat it all over the field."

The gallant captain took his place at the bat, and hit a line ball which was neatly captured by John Brubaker, who received a round of applause, and Ida Boardman waved at him her parasol, with the involuntary cry of "Good, John!" More fortunate than his captain was Sam Morse, the next at the bat. He solved the mysteries of Charlie King's in-shoot and hit the ball over Hart Stirling's head for one base. John Handy then handled the ashen stick and sent a slow ball to Ben Burton who fumbled it and allowed the striker to reach first base, even so far forgetting himself as to

neglect to throw the ball to Stirling who stood ready and impatient at second base to head off Sam Morse. Stirling grew red in the face, clearly losing his temper, and, judging from the look he wore, the low murmur in which he gave a word to the short stop was no pleasant one to hear.

The fourth man at the bat for the Calumets was Rob Peabody, who sent up a short fly which fell into the willing hands of the second base man, making two out for the Calumets with two of the bases occupied, when Tom Shoff went to the batsman's square.

"Ah, this is my Jonah!" said Charlie King, beckoning to the fielders to move backward, knowing Shoff's ability as a batter. In this judgment Charlie was correct, for Shoff hit the first ball pitched, and sent it sailing into the right field, out of the reach of the anxious fielder there, and bringing in two runs and allowing Thomas himself to gain the third base in safety, greatly to the comfort of the Calumets who grinned among themselves as they saw all this from the bench.

Glenn Otto now took his turn at the bat, and it was evident that King was out of humor, as he sent the sphere with such vehemence that he nearly paralyzed big Bill Van Orman's hands. In spite of the heavy gloves he wore, the unfortunate catcher's hands began to swell until, as the Dean County deputy sheriff, from his distant post remarked, "They looked like canvassed hams." But Otto calmly waited for a good ball and when he got it, he gently tapped it, sending it to left field for a single sending in, and Shoff made the

score even at three and three. Jamie Kennedy finished the first inning by hitting a short fly to King. "Hurrah for the Calumets!" shouted some of the more excitable spectators. "Three cheers for Tom Shoff and Glenn Otto!" cried another, and the enthusiasm did not abate until these two complimented gentlemen turned themselves about and doffed their caps.

"I don't think that that was very smart," said Ida Boardman, with as much asperity as she was capable of showing. "Our boys have done much better playing than that without making any fuss about it."

"Pretty good playing, though," said Albert Heaton, as he darted out to send off a despatch to the anxious people in Catalpa.

"We could be worse off," was Hiram Porter's remark, who was preparing to face Morse's curves. "Boys," he continued, "we are on even terms and stand the same chance of winning that they do."

"Provided we are as good players as they are," put in Ben Burton, with a little laugh.

Porter hit a swift grounder to Handy who failed to master it in time to head off the swift base runner, who reached the first bag in safety. Ben Burton behaved as if he were afraid of injuring the ball and the result was that he was sent back to the players' bench by hitting an easy ball to Glenn Otto. "The Lily" next essayed his skill and hit the sphere with all his great might, but Jamie Kennedy handled it finely and

retired the striker at first base. Larry Boyne, whose turn came next, was hailed by the champions and friends of the Catalpas as the man who would put in a safe hit; but he was caught out by Peabody in the right field. In putting him out, Peabody made a brilliant running catch, the ball, apparently being certain to go over his head. The profound stillness of the arena was immediately broken by a ringing cheer saluting the successful catch.

The first striker in this inning for the Calumets was Charlie Webb, who was known as "the chance hitter," but who invariably gave the ball, when he did hit it, such a tremendous blow that it whistled through the air as if it had been belched forth from a cannon. Charlie moistened his hands and swung his bat over his shoulder, as he strode up in front of Charlie King, calling in a big voice, "Now give me a high ball!" He hit the ball, hit it just where he aimed to hit it, and for a moment it was lost in the misty blue above. But Neddie Ellis, flying for the center field fence, gave the watchful spectators an inkling of the whereabouts of the vanished sphere. Charlie Webb, meanwhile, was clearing the bases at a tremendous gait, and, before the ball could be returned to the Diamond Field, he had crossed the home plate and had put his club in the lead. There was another rumble of applause from the sympathetic Chicago onlookers; and Alice Howell's peachy cheek fairly paled. But she said not a word.

Now McWilliams hit a grounder to Larry Boyne who

managed, by dint of a hard struggle, to get it to first base in good season, and Mac went out. Ayres, the gallant captain, met with the same fate in his turn, sending a fly to Larry; and Sam Morse ended the second inning by being fielded out at first base by Stirling. At this, there was a sigh of relief from the Catalpa section, and no audible cheer among the friends of the home club.

In the third inning, the Catalpas managed to gain some of their lost ground by making the single run necessary to put them even with their antagonists. Sam Morrison hit a sharp ball to Handy, who attempted to field it, but the sphere went through his hands and bounded over the foul line. Morrison was about to return to the home plate, thinking that the ball was "foul." But Larry Boyne impetuously cried, "Hold your base!"

Instantly, the crowds were all excitement. Men and boys rose to their feet shouting "Foul!" "Foul!" All was confusion, and Mr. Heaton, Albert, and the young ladies in the upper box looked on speechlessly as the pandemonium raged below.

The umpire seemed dazed, and the hooters, who are ever present, yelled "Foul ball!" "Foul ball!" as if their noise would determine the question. Ben Burton, with an expression of mixed amazement and chagrin, watched Larry, who approached the puzzled umpire with Spalding's official guide-book of base ball. The umpire glanced over the open page and his countenance cleared at once.

Bowing with cold politeness, he said, "You are right,

Mr. Boyne. I am glad to see that you prairie players are well informed as to all the points in the national game."

Larry acknowledged the compliment with a manly salutation and returned to the players' bench. But the spectators would have no such result, and howled on vociferously. The umpire called the game and playing was stopped until silence was restored. When he could be heard, the umpire read the rule in a stentorian tone of voice, whereupon there was some grumbling, but the generous majority, seeing the justice of the position taken for the visitors, cheered "The Curly-headed Cat." Larry acknowledged the dubious compliment. Alice Howell hid her blushing face behind her parasol, and the game went on.

But it was evident that this episode had shaken the Calumets a little, as the next two strikers secured their bases by errors. Ellis won his by a misplay by Glenn Otto, and King took his by an error on the part of Handy. This left the three bases occupied and nobody put out—a capital chance for the Catalpas to get in some telling work. Stirling was retired at first base by Handy, but his being out allowed Sam Morrison to cross the marble plate in safety, by skillful base-running. John Brubaker hit a fly to Peabody in the right field; the latter captured the ball and also made a fine double play as Neddie Ellis tried to come home on it, forgetting the reputation which Peabody had won as a long thrower. And then the Catalpas again took the field.

"I tell you what, boys, it's mighty tough work to beat

these prairie roosters," said the good-natured captain of the Calumets, as his associates took their seats once more on the players' bench.

"If we could only once get a good lead on them," remarked Jamie Kennedy, "I am sure they would be so badly demoralized that we should get away with them. But they don't seem to scare worth a cent. They hold on like grim death."

This conversation was brought to a close by the umpire shouting, "John Handy to the bat!" and John convinced the spectators, as the Dean County Sheriff remarked, that he was "not handy at batting," for he was struck out; and Peabody, who followed, went out on a foul to Captain Porter. Tom Shoff then proved that he was not wholly "The Jonah" that Charlie King had feared him to be by merely going out on a long fly to left field. This ended the third inning, with the contestants neck and neck, each being credited with four runs.

As he took his position before the pitcher, Captain Hiram Porter expressed to his comrades his conviction that the Catalpas were to do some good work in that inning. He felt it "in his bones," he said, whereat Ben Burton laughed contemptuously, and said to "The Lily," who sat next him, that if the bones of Captain Hiram were to be the barometer of the game, the Catalpas would be in hard luck. He had no faith in the Porter family bones, he said.

But Hiram justified his faith in his own impressions by hitting with all his might the first ball pitched and thereby

securing one base. Ben Burton, who followed him, also took one base, but this was through the error of Captain Ayres, who muffed a ball thrown to him by Jamie Kennedy. "The Lily" came next to the bat. He had previously made a small wager with Ben Burton that he would make a safe hit, and, in order to defeat Burton and at the same time benefit the club, he kept perfectly cool, waiting for his opportunity, refusing to strike at any of "Morse's coaxers," as the boys styled the Calumets' pitcher's work. When he got a ball waist-high over the plate, he hit it with sufficient power to fell an ox. The sphere traveled on a right line as though it were shot out of a cannon's mouth, and gave "The Lily" two bases, at the same time sending Porter and Burton over the home plate and giving the Catalpas a lead of two runs.

A broad smile adorned the countenance of "The Lily," and, with cap in hand, he stood ready to fly to third base as soon as the ball was hit. But his ardent desires were not to be gratified; the next three men went out in "one-two-three" order, Larry Boyne on a fly to Glenn Otto, Sam Morrison on a grounder to Handy, and Neddie Ellis on strikes. Third base was the nearest Van Orman came to the home plate, much to his grief; and, as he adjusted his gloves for the next turn behind the bat, he muttered, "Well, I made that ball whistle, anyhow!" Buttoning his hand protectors, with a series of wrenches, he jerked out, "The next one—that Bill hits—will never be found."

Glenn Otto was the first man at the base for the



Calumets in the fourth inning; and he secured his base by Neddie Ellis's muff of an easy ball, and Jamie Kennedy reached first base on called balls. Both of these men, however, were left waiting, as the three players who succeeded them at the bat failed to place the ball out of the reach of the Catalpas. Charlie Webb went out on a fly to Larry Boyne, and McWilliams hit an easy fly to Charlie King; then Darius Ayres was thrown out at first base by Larry Boyne. The inning ended without adding a run to the score of the home nine, but they kept at their work with the steadiness and coolness of men who had a high reputation as players and the consciousness of great strength to support them under adversity.

Elation reigned among the friends of the Catalpa nine. In the high box from which the fair delegation from Catalpa surveyed the field, Miss Alice expressed her complete satisfaction with the condition of affairs, although Miss Ida pretended to entertain feelings of distrust. "Why," she said, "at the end of the fourth inning, yesterday, the Catalpas were three to the Calumets' one—just leading them two, as they are to-day. Do you suppose that the Catalpas will keep this up all through the game?"

"You are as much of a doubting Thomas as Ben Burton is, Ida," answered Alice. "According to Mr. Boyne, Ben is croaking all the while. If the wish were father to the thought, he could not be more skeptical, it seems to me. Isn't he perfectly horrid?"

But words could not be wasted now. The Catalpas went to the bat again, and every eye was riveted on the tall form of Charlie King, who, with his club on his shoulder, sauntered in leisurely and confident fashion to the square. He lifted the ball too high, however, and it was captured by Tom Shoff in the center field. Hart Stirling was deceived by a few sharp inward curves from the pitcher of the Calumets and retired to his seat without hitting a ball. John Brubaker hit the ball, but was thrown out from Otto to Ayres.

The Calumets now came in with a look of determination on their faces. "Steady, lads, steady!" said Captain Darius. "Wait for good balls; and, above all things, keep steady."

Sam Morse, who was first at the bat, strictly obeyed orders and waited for what he considered a good ball. He struck an easy one to Ben Burton, but Ben muffed it, and Morse reached first base before the ball did. A dark cloud passed over the face of Captain Hiram as he anxiously stood at first base, and something like a cloud darkened Alice Howell's fair cheek, far up above the brightly-lighted field, now illuminated by the afternoon sun.

A deep sigh went around among the Catalpa contingent in the open seats, as Stirling, having received a hot ball from Rob Peabody, failed to pick it up with his accustomed skill, and had the mortification of seeing the agile base runner get to the first bag in safety. It was clearly evident now that the Catalpas were a little nervous. "We have

them rattled," whispered the Calumets among themselves, as they sat expectantly on the players' bench. Even Charlie King, who never lost his equipoise, appeared to have left some of his skill behind him, for he did not twirl the ball with that bewildering dexterity that had been, all along, the envy and the terror of the Calumets.

There was a woe-begone expression on the faces of the Catalpa players—save one, and that was Ben Burton, who wore a settled smile of derision. He seemed to be congratulating himself on the possible coming true of his prophecies. Any misplay on the part of the Catalpas was the signal for what Hart Stirling termed "one of Ben Burton's contemptible laughs."

Shoff again faced the pitching of Charlie King and the two players exchanged a grin, a half-defiant recognition of their friendly antagonism. Thomas repeated his hit of the first inning, sending the ball to the left field fence for three bases and sending in Morse, Handy and Peabody, and putting his club in the coveted position of a good lead. Next, Glenn Otto hit a lively grounder to Boyne who caught it safely and retired the base runner; but Tom Shoff went triumphantly home.

After this, "The Cats" seemed to regain something of their old vigor and spirit. A few words of warning, impressing on them the need of keeping cool, and reminding them that they now had everything to gain, and nothing to lose, were dropped by their captain, as they braced themselves for a

good strong play. King neatly fooled Jamie Kennedy with his deceptive in-shoots and the batsman of the Calumets was called out on strikes. Charlie Webb was the last man at the bat in this inning, and he went out on a fly to Hart Stirling.

“That ends the fifth inning!” shouted the scorer. “Score, eight to six in favor of the Calumet club,” an announcement which was not very comforting to the gentlemen from Catalpa, whether they were in the Diamond Field or in the boxes. Al Heaton dashed his hat down over his eyes and went solemnly down to send a despatch which, a few minutes afterwards, was read in the streets of Catalpa with great consternation.

In the sixth inning, the Calumets played with the good luck that usually seems to follow a club which has the lead in the score. Perhaps it was their self-confidence, natural and fitting, that inspired them now. At any rate, they retired the Catalpa representatives of the national game without allowing one of them to reach the first base. Captain Porter was thrown out at the first base by Jamie Kennedy, Ben Burton went out on a fly to McWilliams, and “The Lily” hit an easy ground ball to John Handy, who made a lightning throw to first base in time to head off the deeply disappointed William.

But the Catalpa players showed that they were not out of heart, for their playing was remarkably strong in this part of the inning. Burton threw McWilliams out at first

base; then Darius Ayres hit a "liner" to the left field which was very cleverly caught by Sam Morrison; and the inning was then brought to an end by Sam Morse who struck out; and the sentiment of the spectators was reflected by an irrepressible small boy who cried, "Now 'The Cats' will get a run!"

Larry Boyne, who went to the bat for the visiting club, was the fortunate man who was to make good the small boy's prediction. He opened the inning in magnificent style by hitting the ball fairly and the flying sphere almost struck the left field foul line. It was "a tight squeeze," as one of the Catalpa on-lookers observed, and the umpire's decision was invoked by the captain of the Calumets. The umpire justly gave the ball as fair, whereupon some of the baser sort in the amphitheater began to hoot and cry "Foul!" as if they would thus reverse the decision of the umpire. That gentleman coolly ordered the game to stop until the noise had ceased; there were counter cries of "Shame!" from some of the more orderly of the spectators, and then, quiet having been restored, the contest was resumed, Sam Morrison being at the bat.

Samuel went out on a fly to Ayres. While Neddie Ellis was at the bat, a passed ball allowed Larry to get around to third base. Neddie retired on a foul tip to Charlie Webb, and it looked as if the chances for the Catalpas to make a run were very slender indeed. But Charlie King came to the rescue. He hit a ball to Glenn Otto at short stop, which, luckily for the Catalpas, went through his legs and allowed

King to take his base and brought Larry Boyne to the home plate amidst the cheers of his many admirers. But Hart Stirling dashed the hopes of his comrades for this inning by sending up a fly to Jamie Kennedy at second base.

Alice Howell's little hand was drumming nervously on the rail of her box, as she regarded in dejected silence the scene, when the Calumets came to the bat with a feeling of confidence readily manifest in their faces. But their opponents played a fine fielding game, and the home nine were presented with the figurative "goose egg" which had been so often referred to during the contest. Handy struck three times the unsubstantial air, and Peabody went out disastrously also on a fly to Hiram Porter. Shoff reached the first base on called balls, but only to be left there, as Jamie Kennedy failed to strike the ball after making three terrific lunges at it.

The Catalpas were still hopeful, but not sanguine. They had only one run to make in order to tie their competitors, and they went to work now with a will. They were not nearly so badly off as they might have been, was the cheery comment of Larry Boyne, as they went to the bat once more. But fate was against them, and they were retired in "one-two-three order," as the Calumets played a winning game. John Brubaker hit a ball to Kennedy who sent it to first base in a manner that won the plaudits of the crowds intently watching the contest from the seats around the huge amphitheater. Captain Porter hit a fly to left field which

was captured by McWilliams in wonderfully fine style, and Ben Burton struck out. The Calumets were very fortunate at the bat. In this inning they made another run and again placed themselves two runs in the lead. Kennedy made a base hit, and went to second base on a passed ball, and then reached third base on Burton's error of Webb's in-field hit. Jamie finally scored on McWilliams's out at first base. Next Darius Ayres hit a fly to Sam Morrison and was retired, and Morse ended the inning by striking out, leaving the score nine to seven in favor of the Calumets.

"Small chances for our taking the championship this season," was Ben Burton's gleeful remark, as the Catalpas took their places on the bench.

"And you seem to be mightily tickled about it," replied "The Lily," with an angry glare in his eyes. "If I were as pleased as you seem to be at the drubbing we are likely to get from these chaps, I should expect to be fired out of the club for treachery."

Van Orman did not stop to hear the reply which Burton, white with wrath, made to this taunt. Seizing his bat, he hurried to the square and faced the pitching of the redoubtable and confident Morse. He waited patiently for a good ball and finally received one. With all his might—which was a great deal—"The Lily" hit the sphere and sent it flying to the left field, where the lithe and agile McWilliams captured it, after a hard run which called forth an involuntary burst of applause from the rapt spectators.

"Hang it all! Just my luck!" muttered Van Orman, as, throwing down his bat, he returned to his seat.

But Larry Boyne, as cool and calm as a spring morning, came next, reassuring his friends and comrades by the mere poise of his handsome figure as he took his place in the batter's square. Not a word had he said for the past half-hour, and it was plain to see that he keenly felt the defeat that now stared the Catalpas in the face. But he showed no white feather, bearing himself as if it were an every-day occurrence to find himself in so difficult a predicament. Two strikes were called on him in rapid succession; the third ball he struck at and missed and he was consequently retired for the first time during the day for having failed to hit the ball. The tide seemed to be irretrievably running against the visitors, and many of the less interested spectators began to make their way to the exits, saying as they went, that the game was over.

But a little diversion in favor of the Catalpas now took place. Sam Morrison made a long line hit to center field for three bases, and a slight glimmer of hope dawned in the breasts of the sons of Catalpa. The friendly champions of the club, bunched together in the seats, yelled themselves hoarse over this little turn in the game, encouraging their fellow-townsmen in the Diamond Field with all sorts of cheering cries and remarks. Alice Howell, red and white by turns, and sometimes not seeing the field for the unwanted moisture that gathered in her eyes, waved her



handkerchief at the boys below, never trusting herself to say a word.

With breathless interest, Neddie Ellis was watched as he ran to the bat and squared himself for a decisive stroke of business. Even the umpire, carried away by the unwonted crisis, forgot everything but the trembling balance of the result of the game. He was brought to his senses by a shouting from the grand stand when he considered a ball was too low to be called a strike, although there were only a few persons who thought to the contrary. Neddie was made a little nervous, naturally enough, by the commotion and the stress of the exigency. He knew that there were some chances of winning now depending on his making a good hit. It was a critical point in the closely contested struggle. He made a desperate lunge at the ball, but Jamie Kennedy was at his post and before the hapless Neddie could realize what had happened, Kennedy had retired him at first base and the game was won for the Calumets.

Then a mighty shout went up from the throats of the assembled multitudes, for, although many had slipped out in time to avoid the press of the departing throngs, those who remained were sufficiently numerous and enthusiastic to create a vociferous uproar. In the midst of this, the two captains met in mid-field and shook hands cordially with a few complimentary words from each, as their respective clubs gathered around. Then, the promiscuous cheering in the seats having subsided, the victors gave a rousing cheer, more

or less inspired by their own exultant spirits, for their antagonists; and the Catalpas, nothing abashed by their defeat, returned the cheer with great heartiness.

"Meet us at Catalpa," said Captain Hiram Porter to the captain of the Calumet club. "Meet us at Catalpa, and we will try hard to retrieve the ill fortune of this day."

It had been agreed that the third and concluding game of the championship series should be played at Catalpa, in case the Calumets should win the second game. So, with a few hurried words relating to a friendly meeting of the captains of the two nines, on the morrow, the players dispersed from the field. This was what might have been read on the bulletin boards as they went along their homeward way:—

#### BASE BALL TO-DAY.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
CATALPAS . . . . .	3	0	1	2	0	0	1	0	0 . . . 7.
CALUMETS . . . . .	3	1	0	0	4	0	0	1	0 . . . 9.

*Runs earned*, CATALPAS, 4; CALUMETS, 2.

*Base hits*, CATALPAS, 7; CALUMETS, 7.

*Errors*, CATALPAS, 5; CALUMETS, 7.

*Umpire*, MR. MARK B. REDMOND.

*Time of game*, two hours and ten minutes.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### A STRANGE MESSAGE FROM HOME.

“WELL,” cried Neddie Ellis, cheerily, as the nine filed into Captain Hiram Porter’s room, which had been used as a rallying-place, as it was the largest assigned to any member of the club, “well, we have one more chance at the Calumets, and there is hope while there’s life. Hey, Larry?”

Larry did not immediately reply. He was regarding Ben Burton with suspicion. That individual had received a telegram from the hands of a messenger, as he came into the house, which, having read, he tore into very small pieces and threw away with a disturbed expression of countenance. Ben’s eyes were now fixed on Hiram, who, on coming into the room, had noticed on the mantel-piece a telegram addressed to himself. Ben Burton’s face grew white as his captain, tearing open the envelope, read the despatch with astonishment and wrath depicted on his usually pleasant visage.

“Read her out, Captain,” cried “The Lily.” “Read her

out and let us divide the bad news with you. I'm sure it's bad news, isn't it, Neddie?"

Without stopping to consider whether it were discreet or not to divulge the message that was causing him so much perturbation, Hiram, casting a sharp glance at Ben Burton, said, "It *is* bad news, boys, for it accuses one of our number of treachery. It is from Tom Selby, and it reads thus:—

*"Look out for Ben Burton; he has sold the game."*

"It's an infernal lie!" shouted Ben, passionately, and very red in the face, and shaky in the limbs. "What does Tom Selby know about the game, and how could I sell the game in Catalpa? I'll thrash Tom Selby as quick as I get home; see if I don't!"

"No you won't," said Albert Heaton, who entered the room at this moment. "No you won't. Hear this, Mr. Burton. It's a despatch from Dr. Selby, dated at Catalpa, 5:20 P. M. You see they had then got the news that the game was lost:—

*"I am afraid you did not get Tom's despatch to the captain, for we hear that the game is gone. Hunt up despatch to Hiram, sent to lodgings."*

"What's that despatch you've got there Hi? Is it Tom's?"

"Yes," answered the captain. "It is from Tom. Read it."



"READ HER OUT, CAPTAIN," CRIED "THE LILY."—Page 167.



Albert read the despatch deliberately and said: "I see it all now. My despatch was sent to Judge Morris's office, where I found it when I stopped in there on my way back from seeing the ladies on board of a street-car for the north side. Your despatch should have been sent to the ball grounds, and the idiots here have kept it until it was too late. Oh, this is too bad!" and Albert fairly groaned.

"They couldn't tell what was in the despatch, Al," said Larry, soothingly. "There's no use crying over spilt milk. But what I should like is an explanation from Mr. Burton."

All eyes were now turned on Burton, who defiantly faced his accusers. He was evidently determined to brave out the charge made against him from Catalpa. His cheek grew red and pale by turns, and he failed to keep the serenity that he attempted.

"See him shake," said "The Lily," with bitter contempt. "Did any man ever shake like that when he was innocent. Oh, no, Bennie did not play a mugging game, this afternoon, for nothing!"

"I tell you that's a lie?" roared Ben, furious with rage. "Any man who says I threw the game is a slanderer and I'll fight him. Any man would show feeling and shake, as you call it, Bill Van Orman, if accused of doing such a mean thing as selling out his club, and you know it."

More in sorrow than in anger, Captain Hiram ordered the boys to drop the matter for the present. It could not be determined, in the absence of specific testimony, what amount

of truth would be found in the startling charge made against a member of the club. They must wait until they reached home, he said, before it would be worth while to take any steps in the matter. Meantime, he would advise (but not order) that the members of the club drop the business and say nothing about it, especially not to any outsider.

It was good advice that the captain gave, and the members of the club all followed it so far as speaking of the matter to outsiders was concerned. It was asking too much that they should not talk it over among themselves. By common consent, however, Ben Burton was avoided by all hands. He stood about the house until after supper, then, without leaving any word as to his intentions, he quietly disappeared and was seen no more.

“What a wretched streak of luck!” murmured Larry Boyne to Neddie Ellis. “If that despatch had been sent to Al Heaton, or to Hiram at the ball grounds, all would have been well. We could have withdrawn Ben Burton and put Will Sprague, or Al Heaton, in his place, before the game began. Oh, why did Tom do such a foolish thing as to send the message here?”

“Tom is an idiot!” said Neddie, indignantly. “He’s a feather-head; always was, and always will be! Let’s look at that despatch again, captain.”

Critical examination of the message showed that it was received in Chicago at half-past one o’clock. It had left Catalpa at half-past eleven o’clock in the forenoon.



"Two hours to send that little message!" almost shrieked Neddie Ellis. "It's that giddy, flirting girl that works the telegraph office in Catalpa! That's what's the matter with the message. Now you just remember that, boys."

"Softly! softly! Neddie," said Larry. "You mustn't accuse the operator. Perhaps the line was down, or somebody else blundered. At any rate, the mischief is done. We'll wait until we get home before we try to find out what it all means."

"Aha!" cried "The Lily," as if he had seen a sudden burst of light. "Now we know why Ben was late in the field. Don't you remember he stole out after we had got through practicing, this noon, and was gone half an hour, or so? Where was he? Why, he looked as if he had been stealing sheep when he came back. I'll tell you where he had been. He had been to the telegraph office on the corner below the grounds, telegraphing to some confederate in Catalpa."

"Smart boy, Bill; but why should he go to the next block below the grounds when there is an office in the building? And how could his telegram to his confederate, if he has one, get back here in Tom Selby's message?"

"That's more than I know, Cap, but I should say that he wouldn't dare to send any crooked message from the ball grounds, where he is known."

"There is good sense in that, Billy boy," said Charlie King, who had joined the party while the discussion was

going on. "There is plausibility in it, too, for I remember seeing Ben go into that office and make some inquiries, as we were going to the grounds, day before yesterday, to practice."

Meanwhile, Mr. Heaton was trying to comfort the young ladies in Judge Morris's family, but his well-meant efforts were discouragingly received by the fair champions of the Catalpa club. Miss Alice was perfectly certain, she averred, that Ben Burton had purposely "thrown" the game. She had watched him narrowly, and had been, at times, half inclined to send down word to Mr. Boyne, or to the captain, rather (and this was said with a blush), that Burton was playing false. The players could not see it, but she could, and she knew him so well that she could not keep her eyes off him while he was playing, whether it was in the field, at the bat, or base-running.

Later in the evening, Albert came in with two or three of the Catalpa men, bearing the doleful news from Tom Selby. "Didn't I tell you so?" demanded Alice, with animation. "Didn't I tell you, Larry Boyne, to beware of that young man?"

"You did indeed, Miss Howell," replied Larry, with mock dejection. "And we would have looked out for him, as you suggested, if we had had any tangible suspicion, or any proof whatsoever, that he was 'crooked.' But how could we make a stand against one of our own number, merely on so vague a hint as that which we had?"

"If *I* were a member of the Catalpa club," said the girl, with spirit, "I would not have so evil a young man as Ben Burton in it, evidence or no evidence."

"Miss Alice is right," said Neddie Ellis, "I always did dislike Ben Burton, and I would have voted against him, if it had not been that he was such a good man at short stop that I couldn't think of putting my little prejudices against what seemed to be the good of the nine."

Once more it was agreed that it was useless to discuss the matter until the party had reached home, when the charges against Burton, and the evidence, if there were any, would be brought up in due form.

By the time the players and their friends had embarked on the west-bound train, next day, they had recovered somewhat their usual high spirits. The buoyancy of youth and the natural hopefulness of healthy young fellows like these came to their relief, and the gay, chattering party that took possession of one end of a railway car, that morning, could hardly have been compared with the depressed and angry knot of youngsters that had discussed defeat and treachery, the night before. If they had been sold out, they argued to themselves, and had still fairly held their own against the famed Calumets, what was not possible for the team when purged of an unworthy member?

So they neared home with hearts lightened of a grievous burden and were once more cheered with the reflection that they had achieved one notable victory, at least, since their

departure for Chicago, although a defeat counterbalanced that triumph.

And when the train drew up before the Catalpa depot, the returning adventurers were gladdened by the sight of innumerable flags flying over the town in the distance. They were to be received with congratulations, after all, not as humiliated captives.

"That is because we come home neck and neck, I s'pose," said "The Lily," as the notes of a brass band startled his ample ear.

"It's because we are not so badly off as we might be, Billy boy," replied Larry Boyne.

## CHAPTER XV.

### MIKE COSTIGAN'S DISCOVERY.

**M**EANTIME, strange things had happened in Catalpa. The town was in a ferment on the morning of the great day when the Catalpa nine were to play their second game with the Calumets. The glory of the first day's victory shone brightly to encourage the friends of the club as they loitered towards the telegraph office and clustered under the windows of the office of *The Leaf*, when the time for calling the game drew near.

In the office of that influential sheet there was much commotion, as every printer at the case and every member of the slender editorial staff, even down to the young lady who wrote fashion articles out of the Chicago newspapers, was in some way interested in base ball. Those who were not members of a nine were in training, or were represented by men who were active players. Therefore, while the expectant crowd in the street below was hungry for news from the Diamond Field, the smaller convocation in the printing office above was even hungrier for the opportunity

to hang out the banner of victory which all were sure would wave from the roof of *The Leaf* before the day was done.

A few despatches, vague and dealing only in glittering generalities, as the editor said, were sent early by Albert Heaton and were duly bulletined by "The Leaflet," as Mr. Downey's office boy was generally called. There were many inquiries at the telegraph office for news, but "the lady operator," with needless asperity, referred all applicants to the editor of *The Leaf*.

Mike Costigan, the telegraph messenger, and Hank Jackson, the ex-champion of the Dean County Nine, were the greatest trials which the long-suffering lady at the telegraph desk had to endure. Mike had put his whole soul, which was large for his small body, into the base ball championship, and he was ready to weep if the Catalpas should not return with what he called "the skelps of them Chicago fellers" at their belts. As for Hank, he pretended to be in momentary expectation of a telegraphic despatch. As early as nine o' clock in the morning, he had begun to haunt the telegraph office and demand a message that did not come. Mike was sure that Jackson would have early news from the seat of war, and, wisely fearing Hank's heavy hand and rough tongue, he followed him at a respectful distance, waiting to hear something to encourage his fond hopes of the Catalpa club.

The lad had been hurrying out with a message to Heaton's flouring mills, and he bounced up the stairs of the telegraph

office, three at a time, and flew into the room where the hard-worked operator was rattling at the instrument. A swift look from Mike took in the whole situation. Henry Jackson was seated on a bench in a corner of the office, with his back to the door, puzzling over a little book and a telegraphic despatch. He inspected the pages of the book, then scanned the message, and then, licking the end of a lead-pencil, wrote something on the paper containing the despatch.

"Here, hurry with this message, Mike," said the lady in the office, "and be quick about it; you are always loitering about the corner when you are wanted."

Almost wild at being sent out before he could get an opportunity to extract a bit of news from Hank Jackson, Mike flew out on his errand, astonished the receiver of the message by telling him to hurry up with his signature, and then went back to the office on the wings of the wind. Alas! when Mike re-entered the room, breathless and hot, Hank had departed without leaving any trace of the quality of the news that he might have received. No, not quite so bad as that, thought Mike, as he ruefully surveyed the empty bench, for there in a corner, tossed under the bench on which Henry had been sitting, was a wad of crumpled paper which the boy's experienced eyes told him was from the telegraph company's stores of stationery.

Pouncing upon the ragged ball with the hunger of a small boy in pursuit of information concerning a base ball match, Mike drew forth a "receiving blank," torn and

crumpled, on which was written an incomprehensible message. Kneeling on the floor, his stubby hands shaking with excitement, Mike smoothed out the torn despatch, joining the two larger fragments so as to get the meaning of the words. And this, after some botheration, was what was revealed to Mike's distended eyes:—

Form 2.

## MUTUAL UNION TELEGRAPH CO

This Company TRANSMITS and DELIVERS messages only on conditions limiting its liability, which have been seen in message.

Errors can be guarded against only by repeating a message both to the sending station for comparison, and the Company will not be responsible for transmission or delivery of time-repeated messages, except the amount of tolls paid thereon, nor in any case where the message is not received within sixty days after sending the message.

This is an UNREPEATED MESSAGE, and is delivered by the Company at the request of the sender, under the conditions named above.

JOHN G. MOORE, President.

NUMBER	SENT BY	RECD BY	CHECK
07	J. C. An.		13 6d
Dated		Chicago Ill.	18 9 2004
To		Henry J Jackson	
Catal			
Records Hall	the	rate	lets
can	again	Catal has	my
from	man's	Chemical	result
more	game	sure	
memory	middle	carpet	
Burton.			

READ THE NOTICE AT THE TOP.

"Gosh all hemlock!" this was Mike's extreme of profanity, "if Ben Burton hasn't gone and sold the game!" The lad, who was shrewd beyond his years, carefully put the pieces of paper inside of his jacket, buttoned it up tightly, and, after ascertaining that no message was coming over the wires, and that he might decamp without fear, bolted out of the office, threw himself downstairs, and darted into Dr. Selby's shop like a shot.





"MIKE SMOOTHED OUT THE TORN DESPATCH."—Page 178.



"Here! here! Tom," he gasped, almost beside himself with anxiety and alarm. "Ben Burton's goin' to seil the game! Leastways, here's somethin' crooked! Look at it!"

Thomas, who was keeping shop while his father was absent for a moment, took the paper, with a puzzled look at Mike, then spreading it out on the counter, scrutinized it carefully, and, as he felt a cold chill running down his back at the revelation of an unsuspected rascality, he smote the walnut plank of the counter and cried, "By ginger!" This was Tom's extreme of profanity.

"Where did you get this?" he demanded of the excited Mike.

"In the office, under the bench there by the stove, where Hank throwed it. I seen him readin' it, and then lookin' into a little book—one of them books that has the meanin' of words into 'em."

"Dictionary?" suggested Tom.

"Yes, dictionary, that's what it is. And he'd get a word outen that, then put it down. I had to get out on a message to 'Squire Dewey, and when I got back he was gone; but I got the message. Don't you think it's crooked?"

"Of course I do; and be sure you don't let on to a living soul what you have seen. We'll circumvent him yet."

Mike rushed back to his post, sober with a sense of the important secret that he carried under his ragged jacket.

As soon as Dr. Selby returned, Tom laid the matter before him. The old gentleman was astounded and grieved. No time

was to be lost. Tom must hasten to the telegraph office and send a warning message to Captain Hiram Porter. The lad hurried away, stopping on the sidewalk below the office long enough to note Hank Jackson offering "two to one," as he phrased it, against the Catalpas. The despatch was sent and Tom sauntered back, half-tempted to take up one of the offers of the presumptuous and boastful Hank; but he refrained. He knew that the game of the conspirators had been circumvented. It would be his day's delight to stand by and see the dishonest scheme recoil upon the heads of its promoters.

But as the day wore on and despatches from the ball ground (at first favorable and conclusive proof to the Selbys that they had nipped the conspiracy in the bud) grew more and more discouraging, Tom became desperate; he longed for wings that he might fly to Chicago and reveal the depth of infamy into which one of the club had fallen. Later in the day, when defeat seemed certain, yielding to the boy's importunities, Dr. Selby sent a message to Albert Heaton, in care of Judge Morris.

"Where did you send Hiram's despatch to?" he asked of Tom, suddenly, as if a new suspicion crossed his mind.

"To the Lavalette House, of course. They all stop there!"

"Oh, you idiot!" groaned his father. "They had gone to the ball ground before your despatch could reach Chicago!"

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE CONSPIRACY LAID OPEN.

THE Selbys kept their own counsel, although Tom burned to tell everybody whom he met not to bet with Hank Jackson on the base ball match; but, after pondering the matter in his mind, he came to the conclusion that if people would bet on a base ball game, they must run their own risks and chances. It would serve them right, he thought, if they did lose their money in this foolish fashion. The League, he knew, had enacted severe rules against gaming, and the influence of that example should be strengthened even if by the misfortunes of those who laid wagers.

So there would have been no suspicion of Hank's complicity in any plot, if Mike had been able to keep a secret, but Mike adored "the lady operator" secretly and from afar. He submitted in silence and uncomplainingly to her rebuffs and scoldings for the sake of winning her regard. In a moment of confidence, he imparted to the object of his dumb worship the information that the cipher message which

she had received for Jackson was "crooked." The young lady was shocked. She had heard that Hank was going about town offering to bet against the Catalpa nine, and now she instantly divined what was going on, and was indignant accordingly. The fact that she had been the unconscious channel of communicating with the culprit did not lessen her wrath. Unhappily for Henry, he came to the office in the course of the afternoon, and the operator, as soon as she saw him, "gave him a piece of her mind," to his great discomfiture. Hank, unlike his co-conspirator, did not attempt to deny anything, but tacitly admitted all that was charged against him by the irate young lady.

After turning over in his mind the circumstances of the scrape into which he had been drawn, Master Jackson coolly sat down and wrote the following despatch to Ben Burton:

*The thing is blown. Look out for yourself.*

*HENRY J. JACKSON.*

It was this warning, received by Burton after the game was over, that put him on his guard when he was confronted with the despatch sent to Hiram Porter. Next day, when the town was alive with enthusiasm over the reception to the returning base ball club, Henry Jackson did not appear in any of the excited groups that accompanied the players from the depot to their club-rooms.

The hilarity of the day was somewhat dampened by the

fact that one of the nine was a traitor, and that he must be disciplined, if the charge were proven against him. The evidence shown to the boys on their arrival was tolerably conclusive, but it was needful, as they thought, to secure an admission from either Ben or Henry that there had been collusion between them. Burton's father, a worthy and honest miller, sought out Captain Hiram, and, with much grief, told him that Ben had written to him from Chicago, saying that he was going to Indiana on unexpected business, and that he would not be in Catalpa for some weeks to come. This, to the old gentleman, who had heard the flying reports to his son's discredit, was a suspicious circumstance. He did not like to believe that Benjamin had done anything wrong, he said, but he was "afeard," yes, he was "afeard."

Judge Howell sent for Hank Jackson, and that young man, although at first disposed to be stubborn, finally broke down before the majesterial bearing of the Judge and told all that was needful to convict himself and Ben of having combined to make money by betting on the game between the Calumets and the Catalpas. Ben, he said, had suggested the trick, agreeing to "throw the game," if Hank, and any other confederate whom he might select, would get the bets secured in Catalpa. Henry also thought that Ben had arranged to have a similar scheme at the same time played in Sandy Key, where he had a boon companion.

The story of the despatches was now clearly unravelled. Ben had sent a despatch to Henry Jackson directly after



leaving the Chicago lodgings of the club, on the morning of the second day; subsequently, he had remembered that his friend in Sandy Key might be utilized as a fellow conspirator, and, just before the game was called, he had hurried off a despatch to him, also. Inquiries subsequently developed the fact that this was exactly what had been done.

While Henry was undergoing an examination in Judge Howell's private office, the nine were in consultation. Presently, the door opened and the Judge and his unwilling prisoner appeared.

"Henry has decided to make a clean breast of this unhappy business, Captain Porter," said the Judge. "Speak up like a man, Henry, and tell the gentlemen what you have told me."

With downcast eyes and a sullen manner, Hank fumbled with his cap, and mumbled his story, but without omitting anything relevant to the case. He was heard in silence, although "The Lily," whose eyes glared vengefully at the culprit, with difficulty restrained himself. And when the door closed behind the Judge and the criminal, the ungentle William gave a roar of rage that astonished first, and then set the club off into fits of laughter, in spite of the solemnity of the occasion.

"Well, what is the result of your deliberations, Mr. Boyne?" asked a brisk and somewhat seedy young man, as the boys came down from their club-room. Pulling out a note book and moistening a pencil at his lip, as he spoke, he continued,



"Shocking case of depravity on the part of young Burton. Quite a small sensation, on my word. Small, small for a big city, but really sensational for Catalpa, you know. Ha! ha!" and the young gentleman laughed at his little sally.

"Great powers!" was Larry's exclamation. "You are not going to print anything about this disgraceful business in *The Leaf*, are you?"

"Why, certainly, Mr. Boyne. I have a lovely article written up. We only want the action of the club to round it off, give it completeness as it were, and there you are."

"Oh, that would be very bad!" cried Larry. "I don't mind your saying in the paper that Mr. Burton has been obliged to leave the club, and that we have supplied his place by placing Mr. Albert Heaton at short stop, Mr. William Sprague being unable to play, on account of having sprained his thumb while practicing with the club. But don't let us disgrace the town and the club by making public Ben Burton's treachery!"

A new light seemed to dawn on the reporter's mind, and he sucked his pencil reflectively. Finally, he brightened up and said, "Well, you must go and see Mr. Downey. He was reckoning that we would have a first-class story out of this. I have no authority in the premises. I am only an humble scribbler, a mere local-items, so to speak. But a word from you to the editor-in-chief, Mr. Boyne, will have its effect. Yes, it will have its effect. But that is a lovely story spoiled, Mr. Boyne."

Mr. Downey, when sought in the office of *The Leaf*, was

deeply chagrined to learn that the members of the base ball club were unwilling that anything should appear in next morning's paper regarding the unfortunate affair in which Ben Burton was involved. News was news, he said, and, what was more, news was very scarce at this season of the year. Harvesting was not wholly completed. No shooting matches had been yet arranged, and there was a frightful dullness throughout the county. His hated rival, *The Dean County Banner*, would be almost certain to get hold of the affair, and, as *The Banner* was a semi-weekly, instead of a daily, like *The Leaf*, he would have time to work it up into that dime novel sensation to which *The Banner* was so addicted. And the editor of *The Leaf* curled his lip with fine contempt for his rival.

But the arguments of the young men overwhelmed the generous mind of the editor, who, on condition that similar persuasion should be brought to bear on the editor of *The Banner*, consigned to the waste-basket, but with a pang, the highly-seasoned narrative which his reporter had prepared.

The substitution of Albert Heaton for the derelict Ben Burton was not effected without a struggle. His mother, firm in her conviction that base ball was not an aristocratic game, held out against the arguments of her husband and her son, until Judge Howell, accidentally meeting her on the street, one day, craftily won her over by informing her that he wished that he had a son big enough to play base ball. He was sure that the honor and the glory of defeating the crack

base ball club of the State would now fall to the Catalpa nine. It would be a great day for Catalpa when this happened.

The good lady surrendered. What Judge Howell thought and said seemed to her like law and gospel, social and moral. Albert joyfully received consent to play with the nine—"just for this once."

## CHAPTER XVII.

### A FAMOUS VICTORY.

IT was a great day for base ball when the far-famed Calumet club came to Catalpa to play the home nine. The visitors arrived by the evening train and were met at the station by the greater part of the Catalpa club, who escorted their friends to the hotel in which quarters had been engaged. To say that the strangers were objects of curiosity to the youths and lassies of the town would only faintly describe the enthusiasm with which they were received by the people of Catalpa. The morrow was to witness the final game of the struggle, already made sufficiently notable by the narrowness of the margin left for the two contestants, and by the notoriety given to it by the treachery of Ben Burton, now town-talk, but (thanks to the discretion of the players) not known outside of Catalpa.

So high ran the excitement that there were many sleepless youngsters in Catalpa, that night, although the seasoned veterans who were the actors in the drama slept as soundly as though the next day would not dawn, big with the fate

of rival base ball clubs. Tom Selby, as his father reported, arose at frequent intervals through the night, looked out on the cloudless sky across which the harvest moon was riding, and went back to his bed with a deep-drawn sigh of satisfaction at the prospect of another fine day for the great match.

It was a beautiful day that lighted up the valley of Stone River; and the mellow October sun flooded the scene with splendor, when the crowds began to flow towards the Agricultural Fair Grounds, now re-furbished with great care, and decorated with every available bit of bunting in the place. An enormous throng greeted the sight of the players as they entered the enclosure and made their way directly to the officers' old rooms, now set apart for the use of the members of the two nines. Special trains had been run on the two railroads entering the town, and from the country round about came long lines of farm-wagons filled with rustic belles and beaux, stalwart young fellows from the rural districts, elder people from outlying villages, and small boys who had heard from afar the news of the great event that was about to happen, and had trudged into town from distant homes, carrying their frugal luncheons with them—all bound to see the sport.

There was Judge Howell's carriage, you may be sure, with the Judge, his pretty daughter, and his prim sister, eager for the sight, even Miss Anstress grimly admitting, as if under great mental pressure, that she did hope that the Catalpas

would beat and so have done with what she thought a long and very unnecessary contest for the championship of the State. There, too, was old Rough and Ready, alert and spry as a lad of nineteen, making himself very busy trimming the flags, inspecting the grounds, and running of errands for the players, conscious that but for him the game could not go on. There was a great and tumultuous cheer when the two nines, clad in their uniforms, finally emerged from the unpainted little buildings near the judges' stand in which they had made ready for the game. Hank Jackson, with what some thought was unparalleled impudence, under the circumstances, but which may have been prompted by a spasm of repentance, stood up on his seat and proposed "three rousing cheers for the Catalpa nine" as that famous organization filed into the Diamond Field. Whereupon, Mr. Heaton, fixing his fond paternal eye on his son, now wearing the uniform of the home club, waved his tall hat and asked for three cheers for the visitors, and these were given with a will.

"Ah!" sighed Alice, as the Catalpas lost the toss and went to the bat at the direction of their antagonists, "that is a bad sign; but I have made up my mind not to notice any more signs, good, bad, or indifferent."

"A sensible conclusion, child," said the aunt. "I have heard that base ball players are as superstitious as sailors, and that is one reason why I think that the game must be debasing to the morals of the players."

Alice laughed loud and long at this, and even the Judge relaxed his face into a smile as he heard the sage observation of the elderly lady before him.

“Pay attention, Alice,” said her friend Ida, “there goes that handsome Larry to the bat!”

But it was needless to direct attention to the player. Every eye was fixed on the favorite as he lifted his bat jauntily and took his position with a knowing smile to Sam Morse, the Calumets' pitcher, as if in recognition of their former contests. But Larry, and Sam Morrison, who succeeded him, failed to hit the ball safely. And Neddie Ellis, who came next to the bat, secured his base only by an error on the part of Captain Ayres, at first base. There was then a chance for the Catalpas to score, but this was destroyed by Charlie King's going out on a fly. Equally unsuccessful were the Calumets, who now came to the bat with high hopes. Darius Ayres hit a fly to John Brubaker, in the right field, and that vigorous young man neatly captured the ball amid the plaudits of his fellow townsmen, who were plainly glad of the least occasion for hilarity. Sam Morse was retired at first base, and John Handy hit a sky-scraper to Neddie Ellis, ending the first inning without a run.

Again both clubs, watching each other with rigid scrutiny, failed to score a run. Each of the nines played a model fielding game and the result was that not a player reached first base in safety. For the Catalpas, Hart Stirling struck out; John Brubaker hit a slow ball to

Jamie Kennedy who fielded him out at first base, and Hiram Porter went out on a fly to James McWilliams.

The Calumets were retired with equal precision and celerity, Rob Peabody being thrown out at first base by Albert Heaton, Tom Shoff meeting his fate at the same point at the hands of Hart Stirling, while Glenn Otto failed to hit the ball, although he made three mighty strokes at it.

The third inning began without a run to the credit of either club, and it ended in like manner. The Catalpas went to work with a will that promised to achieve something for their success, but they were forced to yield to the strong fielding game played by the visitors. Al Heaton made his first appearance at the bat, and a little rustle of applause ran around the crowded seats as he stepped lightly to his position. He had been "a little shaky," as he expressed it confidentially to his friend Larry, but the welcome he received from the spectators gave him a bracing of the muscles, and he hit a hard ball to the right field, where it was captured neatly by Rob Peabody. "The Lily" next tried his best to hit the ball, but he could not send it out of the diamond, and, as Deputy Sheriff Wheeler remarked, "he died at first base." Larry Boyne fared no better than his predecessors, as he hit up a very easy fly which fell to the lot of Shoff. It was the work of a few minutes to dispose of the Calumets. Jamie Kennedy struck out; Charlie Webb was retired at first base, after hitting a hot ball to Hart Stirling, and McWilliams went down before the deceptive curves of the Catalpas' pitcher



“Three innings and not a run yet!” was the exclamation of Miss Ida Boardman. “Why, both clubs seem to be watching each other as a cat would watch a mouse! I wonder if either will score a run in this game? If they don’t, I shall feel as if my time was wasted, shan’t you, Alice?”

But Miss Alice, with a demure glance at her aunt, who beheld the field with a listless manner, declared that the playing was simply splendid, and she pitied anybody who could not appreciate the wonderful fielding of the two clubs. She wished victory for the home nine; but she could not withhold her generous praise for the fine playing of the visitors.

When Sam Morrison went to the bat for the Catalpas, there was on his face a look of determination that indicated mischief, as his admirers said among themselves. “The Lily” said, “It is high time that something was done, and we must be the first to send a man across the plate.” Sam hit a difficult grounder to Handy, who allowed the base runner to reach the first bag in safety, by making a poor throw to Ayres, after accomplishing a first-rate stop, at third base. Neddie Ellis made his first base hit of the game, and this advanced Morrison to third base.

The next two strikers, Charlie King and Hart Stirling, threw a gloom over the spirits of the Catalpas and their allies sitting in rapt silence in the benches around, by going out at first base. As John Brubaker, the redoubtable, handled his bat in this inning, the attention of the spectators was fixed on him when he took his position. The

eyes of Sam Morrison and Neddie Ellis were also riveted on John; the former was on third base, and Neddie had succeeded in reaching the second bag in safety. Anxiously did they wait to be sent around homewards. John hit a ball over the head of Tom Shoff which secured him two bases and his club the same number of runs, as Morrison and Neddie finished the circuit of the bases on this timely hit of the right fielder of the home nine. A great roar of applause went up from the assemblage, and the moisture gathered in the eyes of some of the more impressionable of the fair ones among the spectators. It was an auspicious moment for the Catalpas. The spirits of the on-lookers were slightly dampened, however, by Captain Hiram's being put out, which ended this half of the inning.

Nor was the scoring of runs to be confined to one club. The Calumets, in their half of the inning, also "broke the ice," as Rob Peabody expressed it to Shoff. Captain Darius hit the first ball pitched and it yielded him a base hit. Sam Morse struck up an easy fly which fell before the skillful fielding of Sam Morrison. Next to the bat came John Handy, who imitated the example of John Brubaker, sending home his captain on a two-base hit. Rob Peabody took his base on called balls, but was put out by a neat double play. Tom Shoff hit a ball to Al Heaton who threw it to Stirling, who put out Peabody and then threw it to first base in time to head off Thomas; and the fourth inning was closed with the Catalpas two to one for their competitors.

Whereat there was a thundering round of applause from the partial spectators.

Inspired by this token of their success, the sons of Catalpa went cheerily to the bat and began what proved to be a fruitless attempt to increase the lead of their club. Albert Heaton, their first striker, made a base hit and reached second base on a bad throw by Charlie Webb, but he was left there, as "The Lily," Larry Boyne, and Sam Morrison were all retired at first base. Here the Calumets played a first-rate game and ran the bases in fine style, taking advantage of two errors committed by their opponents, which allowed them to score the single run needed to put them on even terms. Glenn Otto, the first striker, went out on a fly to Larry Boyne. The next man to the bat was Jamie Kennedy, who hit a line ball to Sam Morrison, who fumbled it and allowed the base runner to reach the first bag safely. Kennedy then succeeded in reaching the second base by a passed ball, and was sent across the home plate by Charlie Webb, who struck the ball for a base hit. McWilliams went out on a foul fly to "The Lily," and Darius Ayres ended the inning, being fielded out at first base.

In the sixth inning, the Catalpas once more took the lead. Neddie Ellis led off with a base hit and was followed by Charlie King, who secured his base by an error on the part of Glenn Otto. Hart Stirling went out on a fly to Rob Peabody and was followed at the bat by John Brubaker, who hit

safely and so sent in Neddie Ellis amidst the cheers of the excited spectators, now fairly alive with enthusiasm. Hiram Porter was thrown out at first base, and Al Heaton hit a long fly to McWilliams, which the latter deftly captured, and the crowd, apparently anxious to seem impartial, loudly applauded the catch.

The Calumets failed to tally one in their half of this inning. Sam Morrison made a base hit and Peabody went to first on a trifling error by Captain Porter, but Handy, Shoff and Glenn Otto were retired in quick succession, the first-named at first base and the other two on high flies to the out-fielders.

Once more the Catalpas added to their score, the glory of making a home run falling this time to "The Lily." Coming to the square, he swung his ashen bat over his shoulder, and selecting a "drop ball," he hit with a will and with all his might, and the sphere flew far over the center fielder's head, giving the gratified catcher of the home nine the first and only home run of the game. Before the ball could be returned to the diamond, Van Orman had cleared the circuit of the bases, and, as he seated himself breathlessly on the players' bench, he was greeted with a hearty round of cheers from the excited throng. Cries of "Good for 'The Lily' of Catalpa!" burst from the multitude, and Ida Boardman waved her scarf at the bashful William, who detected the compliment from his post on the opposite side of the amphitheater.

"Get up, Bill, and show yourself proud!" cried Neddie Ellis. "You have won an encore." At this, Bill heaved up

his burly form, doffed his cap and grimly bowed to the spectators, who cheered him more wildly than ever.

But Larry, who now took his bat to the square, was the cynosure of all eyes. Somehow, the confidence of the great assembly was with him always, even as their affection seemed lavished on peachy-cheeked Neddie Ellis. But Larry failed to win the plaudits that would have readily followed the least pretext for a burst of applause. He made a single hit, but did not score a run, as Sam Morrison, Neddie Ellis and Charlie King were rapidly retired, one after another. In this inning, the Calumets succeeded in keeping themselves within one run of their opponents. Jamie Kennedy made a two-base hit, and, after Charlie Webb and James McWilliams were retired at first base, they scored a run which was achieved by Captain Darius Ayres making a base hit. Sam Morrison ended the inning by going out on a "liner" to Larry Boyne.

The score now stood four to three in favor of the Catalpas, and as "The Lily" sagely remarked, "It's anybody's game." The home club tried every possible maneuver to increase their lead; but all was in vain. The contest was now drawing to a close, and the least bit of luck falling into the hands of the visiting nine would carry them so far ahead that defeat would be inevitable for the Catalpa club. Hart Stirling, John Brubaker, and Hiram Porter, the first three strikers for the home club, went out very quickly in the order named. Then the Calumets came to the bat with high hopes of securing at least the one run needed to bring them up to

an even score with their adversaries. But they, too, were doomed to disappointment. John Handy, Rob Peabody, and Tom Shoff were put out in "one-two-three order," so skillful was the fielding and so accurate the throwing of Larry Boyne, Hart Stirling, and Al Heaton.

"The last inning! The last inning!" cried Miss Alice, gleefully clapping her hands, "and the Catalpas are first at the bat, with a lead of one to their credit! Oh, I do hope that Albert will make a run! I know he will! Look at him where he stands! Isn't he handsome, Aunt Anstress?"

Miss Anstress Howell turned her cool glance in the direction of the Diamond Field, and looking at Albert, said that she was not sure whether a young man could be called good-looking in those singularly ill-fitting and peculiar clothes that ball-players wore; but she was interested in the game, as a whole, she said, without any special interest in the players as individuals. She took in the performance without any thought for the men who carried it forward. "You are a kind of overseeing providence, Anstress?" said the Judge.

While they were talking, a murmur, only a murmur, of conversation swept around the crowded enclosure, and everybody seemed to be saying to his neighbor that this was the conclusive and crucial moment in the struggle. All eyes were intent on Al Heaton, and even grown men held their breath, as, with close tension of every nerve, they watched the movements of the players in the field. Tom Selby, attended by his faithful satellite, Mike Costigan, who had a

holiday, gazed with admiring eyes at his demi-god, Albert Heaton, and so still was the air, now soft and warm and dimmed by the lustrous October haze, that one might have heard a leaf drop, as Bill Van Orman eloquently expressed it, afterwards.

Albert patiently waited for a good ball, and when he saw one come, at last, he sent the sphere out of the reach of Glenn Otto and placed a base hit to his credit. Next came "The Lily" who hit the very first ball pitched, for two bases, and, with a volley of ah-h-h-s following him, sent in Al Heaton to the home plate. Larry came next in order, and pretty Alice Howell felt a quickening of her pulse and her color glowing as she saw the resolute and sturdy figure of the favorite of the club shouldering his bat and striding to position. Larry made a safe hit to the right field, sending in "The Lily," and securing his own base. Sam Morrison was put out at first while Larry shot to second base. Then Neddie Ellis went out on a fly to Rob Peabody, and Charlie King ended the inning for the Catalpas, by striking out, leaving Larry on third base, to which he had stolen meanwhile.

The Catalpas now had a lead of three, and the Calumets came to the bat with lugubrious faces. "But I have seen sicker children than this get well," was Captain Ayres's philosophical remark, as Glenn Otto went to the bat for the visiting club.

The Catalpas went to the field with an elation which they could hardly conceal, and with a tolerably firm belief in

their victory. They handled the ball with a dexterity almost unexampled, even for them, and speedily put a damper on any hopes that the Calumets might have cherished. Glenn Otto went out on a fly to John Brubaker. Jamie Kennedy was thrown out at first base by Hart Stirling, and Charlie Webb ended the game by hitting a hot ball to Larry Boyne who made a lightning throw to first base, before any of the spectators could see what had become of the ball, so swift and agile were his motions.

A great cheer burst forth from the multitude. The umpire superfluously cried "Game" in the midst of a deafening uproar, and, as the two captains advanced towards each other to clasp hands, the Catalpas, relieving their pent-up enthusiasm with a wild yell, swooped down upon Larry Boyne, whose brilliant play had terminated the game, and, seizing him bodily, carried him above their heads, shouting "Hurrah for the 'Curly-headed Cat!'" as they swung around and round the Diamond Field. Men and boys whooped and shouted, women waved handkerchiefs and parasols, and numberless small boys shrilly added to the din. Truly it was a great day for Catalpa.

For a moment, Alice could not trust herself to speak. And when, with unsteady voice, she responded to her father's delighted comments, he looked at her with surprise and said,

"Why, Alice, my child, I believe you are crying!"

"For joy, papa," was all she said. Just then, the lads, still carrying Larry, with flushed face and sparkling eyes, his curly hair ruffled by his unwonted treatment, surged towards





"HURRAH FOR THE CURLY-HEADED CAT!"—Page 200.



the Judge's carriage. Alice extended her hand, and their eyes met with one swift glance of unspeakable elation. The Judge looked on with benignant approbation, an unusual lump rising in his throat as he regarded with unaffected admiration the young athlete who had carried off the honors of the day.

"You are to be congratulated very heartily, Mr. Boyne," he said. "Our club has won a famous victory, and it is a proud thing for you that your associates fix upon you as the noblest warrior of them all."

With more cheers and congratulations, the assembly slowly dispersed, the booming of an anvil salute falling on their ears as the men, women and children of Catalpa descended the hill to the town. And in the records of that proud community was written this score:—

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9.	<i>total.</i>
CATALPAS . . . . .	0	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	2	=6.
CALUMETS . . . . .	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	=3.

*Runs earned*—CATALPAS, 3; CALUMETS, 2.

*Base hits*— " 10; " 5.

*Errors*— " 3; " 4.

*Umpire*, Mr. JOHN E. O'NEILL.

All these things happened years ago. It would be difficult for any inquiring stranger to gather the threads of the narrative herein set forth. Even the name of the Calumet base ball club disappeared from the roll of the League, after that

once-famous organization had been reconstructed, merged, and re-reconstructed. The title of the Catalpa Base Ball Club has survived time's changes, but the founders of the club are now sedate upholders of the dignity and credit of their city, with little time or inclination for athletic sports. Their successors cherish with just pride the traditions of the early achievements of the club, and the titles of the original nine are carried with due respect for those who first wore them. The visitor in Catalpa would note many changes in the busy western town from which the famous base ball club went forth to conquer. Judge Howell has left the bench; and he and his daughter Alice have taken to themselves a partner, whose name appears on a signboard bearing the inscription—

HOWELL & BOYNE, *Attorneys at Law.*

Of a summer afternoon, when the cares of business may be laid down for a while, 'Squire Boyne, as he is called by his fellow-townsmen, may sometimes be found seated in the outer rim of the well-appointed amphitheater of the Catalpa grounds, with other battle-scarred veterans around him, watching the mimic combat in the field below, and telling once more  
HOW OUR BASE BALL CLUB WON THE CHAMPIONSHIP.

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